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ABSTRACT

This report presents a comprehensive plan, developed by the D.C. Committee on Public Education, to help strengthen the public schools in the District of Columbia. Chapter 1, "An Introduction: A Vision of the Future," contains the following sections: (1) "Description of the Committee"; (2) "Philosophy and Beliefs of the Committee"; (3) "The Mandate for Reform"; and (4) "A Vision of the Future." Chapter 2, "Major Educational Reforms: Children Come First," contains the following sections: (1) "The Early Years: A Strategy for Reaching Those in Need with High-Quality Programs"; (2) "The Curriculum: A Revitalization"; (3) "Standards that Promote Learning"; (4) "Expansion of the School Day and the School Year"; and (5) "A System of Distinction with Alternatives of Excellence." Chapter 3, "Teachers: The Heart of Effective Schools," contains the following sections: (1) "Toward a Professional Workforce"; (2) "Compensation, Career Ladders, and Incentive Pay"; (3) "New Criteria for Teaching in the District of Columbia"; and (4) "In-Service Training Needs and Instruction." Chapter 4, "School Management: A Redirection," contains the following sections: (1) "School-Based Management and Leadership"; (2) "The City's Governance Dilemma: Thoughts on a Resolution"; and (3) "The School as a Business: Management Improvements that are Essential." Chapter 5 is "Facilities: The Need for Better Buildings." Chapter 6 is "Financing: How to Pay for a Better School System." Chapter 7 is "Implementation: How to Begin the Plan." Fifteen tables and 34 figures are included. Information on those involved in developing the plan and the goals for students suggested by the Committee are appended. (JS)

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The D.C. Committee on Public Education

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OUR CHILDREN, OUR FUTURE

REVITALIZING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Report by

The D.C. Committee on
Public Education

Washington, D.C.

June 1989

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June 21, 1989

There is no end to the list of people who contributed to the work of the D.C. Committee on Public Education, and any attempt to thank them adequately for their contribution pales in comparison to the assistance they have provided.

First, we would like to thank all the teachers, administrators, parents, and students in the D. C. public schools who testified at town meetings, filled out questionnaires, submitted to interviews, and patiently took the time to educate us. We hope that we have provided something useful in return.

The Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Andrew Jenkins, had the wisdom and courage to ask a group of outsiders to carry out this study in order to build broader support for public education in the District. The members of the Board of Education also gave generously of their time to further the work of the Committee.

When the Federal City Council was asked to organize the D.C. Committee on Public Education, we knew that the key to a successful project was identifying strong and effective leaders. Carmen Turner and Terry Golden, the Committee's co-chairmen, have brought an extraordinary degree of commitment, intelligence, and enthusiasm to this undertaking. The entire community owes them an enormous debt of gratitude.

The members of the Committee—business and civic leaders, parents, religious leaders, university presidents, distinguished educators—gave literally thousands of hours to this project. Now, as the report is about to be released, it is gratifying to note how many members of the Committee are personally committed to staying involved with the schools.

We also want to thank the scores of volunteers—architects, engineers, estimators, and building managers—who visited and inspected every school building in the District, and contributed immensely to this report.

The project owes a great debt to the many consultants and educators both in the Washington area and throughout the United States who shared with us their insights and judgments. They are too numerous to mention individually, but the final report has been immeasurably improved because of their assistance. Hill and Knowlton provided us with advice and counsel on a number of issues, and Joseph Foote skillfully coordinated all aspects of the production of the final report.

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James R. Jones
President
Federal City Council

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

June 21, 1989

Dear Fellow Citizens:

As President of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools for the District of Columbia, respectively, we invite your review of this report by the D.C. Committee on Public Education.

The report represents, in our judgment, a blueprint for our school system's future. We have participated in discussions of the recommendations contained in this report and endorse them as a broad, workable strategic plan. However, we recognize, as does the Committee, that many of the specific issues in the report need to be further discussed and debated in a variety of forums over the next several months.

By way of background, last year the Superintendent asked the Federal City Council to conduct an independent assessment of the public schools in the District of Columbia and to develop a long-range plan to improve them. The Council organized a broad-based committee made up of business and civic leaders, university presidents, religious leaders, parents, and nationally known education experts. The Committee undertook a top-to-bottom look at our schools over the past six months.

The Council was asked to conduct this evaluation for several reasons. First, we know that substantial progress has been made in our schools, and we wanted to see how far we have come. Second, we know that further improvements are needed, and that true reform must engage the entire community, if we are to make further progress. Third, we recognize that reform must begin with an honest assessment of where we stand today.

We have discussed with the Committee the findings of the report, as well as the recommendations. Many of the latter build upon initiatives undertaken by the school system over the past several years, and are therefore consistent with our thinking. Others reflect sound ideas with which we agree but fiscal restraints in recent years thwarted our ability to implement the recommended actions. But the report also calls for an intensity and commitment to reform from all sectors of the Washington community that is significantly different from the past.

The report emphasizes the need for the entire Washington community to join with the school system to improve teaching and learning. With your guidance and help we are confident that the District of Columbia public school system will more effectively meet the needs of its 88,000 students in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Linda W. Cropp

Mrs. Linda Cropp
President
Board of Education

Andrew E. Jenkins III

Dr. Andrew E. Jenkins, III
Superintendent of Schools
Chief State School Officer

FROM THE D.C. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

June 21, 1989

An Open Letter to Our Fellow Citizens:

Over the past six months, the D.C. Committee on Public Education has undertaken an intensive examination of all aspects of the public school system in the District of Columbia. As you may know, the Committee was formed by the Federal City Council last year at the behest of the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Andrew Jenkins, and the Board of Education. The Federal City Council was asked to put together a broad-based committee to work with the Superintendent and the Board to develop a long-range plan to improve the education provided to children in our city.

Our Committee numbers some 64 individuals drawn from the business and professional community, the churches, the universities, parents, and nationally recognized experts in education.

We want to stress that the Committee has been working in partnership with Dr. Jenkins, with the Board of Education, and with the Mayor and City Council. It has been a collaborative process from the beginning, and we expect to work with the Superintendent, the Board, and city officials to achieve our mutual goal of improving the educational system for the 88,000 youngsters in our public schools.

All of us know that serious issues face our nation and its urban areas—and the District of Columbia is no exception. The drug scourge has reached epidemic proportions and cannot be allowed to go unchecked. Children in our urban areas are particularly vulnerable. And we as a society must come to grips with this serious problem. We must work together for our children. They are our future. They are this country's most precious resource and that resource cannot be squandered.

Today, the city's agenda appears driven by the harsh realities of drugs, crime, and violence. And the solutions that are being discussed— more police, more prisons, and a swifter and tougher criminal justice system—represent important, short-term approaches to reclaiming city streets and neighborhoods.

But, quite frankly, these approaches are short-term and ignore the need to create a future for our children and our city. We already have a higher percentage of adults in jail than any other jurisdiction in the United States—more than 1,500 people incarcerated for every 100,000 residents. We already have a budget for corrections that has grown by 100 percent over the last six years. We already have the largest police force on a per capita basis of any city in the country.

In dealing with the problems that confront today's young people, we firmly believe that this community needs to take a long-term approach. We must all commit to working with youngsters. Many of the city's children live under extremely difficult circumstances and we must find a way to show them that education is their path to a brighter future. That discipline and hard work pay off in the long run.

But how do we send this message to kids? One way is to work with an institution that can offer a positive alternative—and that's the public school system. Although it doesn't get said often enough, our Committee has reconfirmed that most of our schools are places where learning is taking place, and where kids are engaged in productive activities. We need to give credit to the teachers and the principals who are making this happen, even in the face of very trying circumstances.

Thanks to the work of dedicated professionals in the school system, a substantial number of students benefit enormously from their public education in the District. They learn about themselves and the world, they learn the basics of mathematics and English, they learn to compute, they learn to

express themselves in the written and spoken word, and they learn tolerance and the importance of treating others with dignity and respect.

These success stories go virtually unnoticed in this city. For example, our elementary school students at both the third and sixth grade levels are scoring at the national average on composite tests of basic skills in English and math. A number of elementary schools offer math and science programs that would be the envy of any school in the country. At Shepherd Elementary School, there is a remarkable pilot program that challenges children and encourages them to be inquisitive.

We also have some real success stories at the secondary school level. Vera White, the principal at Jefferson Junior High School, oversees a rich variety of programs for all youngsters, including after-school activities that keep children engaged and involved in a positive way. Over 75 percent of the graduates of Banneker Senior High School go on to college. And the Ellington School has produced outstanding performing artists.

Having said that, we cannot ignore the very real problems that confront the District of Columbia and its schools. Problems begin early for children, and poverty is at the root of many difficulties. Approximately 30 percent of all children in the District under 16 live in poverty. Many more children come from homes where the only parent must work outside the home to support them, and therefore cannot supervise them before and after school or during the summer months. Many of these parents are school dropouts who lack certain parenting skills. As a result, children's visions of the future are limited, and dominated by the realities of the streets.

From the start, our teachers and principals see young children who come to school with health and developmental problems so severe that they have difficulty identifying primary colors or holding crayons. Health officials have stated that we have a growing problem in this community of children who are born to substance-abusing mothers, children who are seriously affected because of their mother's drug use during pregnancy.

As children grow older, our schools fail to reach many of them. We talked to students. Too many are not engaged in education. They find school boring, unchallenging, uncaring, and not relevant to their lives. Too many students are not attached to school, either emotionally or intellectually. From the beginning, they feel like failures, and they do fail.

Four out of 10 D.C. teenagers drop out of school before earning a diploma. Our graduating seniors, on the average, are two years behind their peers in terms of basic math and reading. They are often not fully prepared for the world of work and many of those who go on to higher education require remedial work.

Whereas in the past, youngsters who dropped out or did not do well in school had good jobs at good wages to drop into, today's dropouts and undereducated youth have little prospect of a bright economic future. The jobs of today, and particularly in the D.C. area, demand the capacity to do knowledge work, to have the skills necessary to continue to learn in order to adjust to the rapid advances in technology and information and their application. Anyone without a solid education, not only in the basics but in problem-solving and thinking, will be left behind. The reality is that the D.C. schools have not kept pace with this new world—and, unfortunately, many of the children in D.C. are being left behind.

The practical effects for Washington are plain to see. Our school system produces young men and women who are, in large numbers, not ready for the demanding service and high-technology jobs that this region is generating. Good jobs go begging here, and this situation seems likely to

become worse in coming years. Instead of entering the workforce, many of these young people move from one low-paying job to another, shifting on and off of unemployment and all too often eventually resorting to public dependency. Young women who become pregnant are in many cases left by their partners to fend for themselves. An alarming number of young people enter crime and drug dealing as a means of self-support.

The costs of these outcomes fall principally on District residents and taxpayers. The District should be a wellspring of bright, energetic young workers, and it is not. The District should be reasonably free of crime and drug dealing, and it is not. These are among the costs that all citizens share. The greatest costs, however, can be measured in the unfulfilled lives of thousands of young men and women in our city.

We commend Dr. Jenkins and the Board for candidly acknowledging these problems. We know the problems are there, and we also believe that the necessary precondition to making real progress is for all of us—those with children in school and those without—to make a long-term commitment to the resolution of these problems.

We've learned that other school systems are making progress in addressing their problems. Our Committee has seen Dr. James Comer's program in New Haven in which a close link has been forged between the home and the school, and parents at all income levels are actively engaged in supporting the education of their children. We have visited Miami/Dade County where the school superintendent and the union have agreed to give more authority and responsibility to local schools so that they can succeed. We have learned about District 4 in East Harlem where a school system that used to rank last among the 32 districts in New York has been turned around, in part, by allowing parents to choose where to send their children to school.

These are but a few of the educational success stories of which we are aware. The point is that we know that other cities have been successful and we know that there are valuable lessons to be learned from their experiences.

The recommendations in the next section of this report lay out in detail our vision for the future; but we want to take a moment here to sketch out some of our findings that led to these recommendations.

We believe firmly that all children can learn, regardless of their circumstances, and that schools, if they receive the proper guidance and assistance, can be restructured so that children's learning will improve dramatically. With high expectations, over the next decade we believe that virtually every student should be able to read, write, and do math at a level appropriate for his or her grade level and age. But high expectations are not enough. We need to improve schools in other ways, as well.

We looked carefully at early childhood programs. We know from a lot of very solid research that good early childhood programs have been very successful in helping at-risk children succeed. We also know that in the absence of these programs, many children start way behind when they enter school. Such youngsters are far more likely to drop out or profit less from their school experience. The District is a national pioneer in early childhood education, offering full-day, prekindergarten programs in virtually every school in the city. But we also found that this broad policy commitment needs to be further strengthened by improving the quality of programs, extending them to offer comprehensive services, and reaching out to those at-risk three- and four-year-olds who are currently not being served. The Committee is recommending a series of steps to make quality, comprehensive early childhood programs available to all at-risk children age three and above.

We also recognize that parent involve-

ment is essential. Unless we help parents understand the importance of education, and unless we provide training for those parents who want to help their children but may not know how, our efforts in school with children will not succeed.

We examined the curricula and instruction and student outcomes. The overall low levels of student achievement on basic skills, the declining levels of achievement as students progress throughout the grades, the truancy problem and the high dropout rate, result, in part, from what goes on inside schools. Reform is essential if we are to reach those at risk. Thus, we have identified a series of reforms, including substantial training opportunities for teachers, that will help revitalize teaching and learning in schools.

At the same time, while we need to improve what goes on inside schools, we need to increase the time children spend in productive activities. We find that there are few alternatives, other than the streets, available to many District youngsters after school and during the summer months.

We are recommending keeping schools open from early in the morning until 6:00 P.M., to deal with the problems encountered by latch-key children and to offer opportunities for tutoring, doing homework, participating in hobbies and clubs, and playing sports. After-school programs would be mandatory for those in need of academic assistance, and we propose offering remedial and other programs to improve student performance. Good schools are already doing these things because they work; what we are proposing is to make this the norm in our city.

We are also recommending a summer school program that, in effect, lengthens the school year from 180 to 220 days. This program will keep children off the streets, provide opportunities for continued learning, expose children to enrichment activities where they will see school as fun, offer special help for children who need academic assistance so that they don't fall further behind their peers, and provide children with a sense that they are important and can achieve.

Good teachers and principals are the heart of any successful school system. Our Committee has looked at how to attract and retain high-quality teachers and how to keep them in the classroom. We want the best teachers for our kids. But there are problems with the District's ability to recruit and retain a high-quality workforce. Compensation is significantly below levels in the surrounding jurisdictions. There are few financial incentives for quality performance. And the applicant pool is not large enough to enable the District to be highly selective.

We found most teachers and principals in the District of Columbia to be competent and hard working. However, far too often their efforts are overshadowed by a relatively small number of classroom teachers and administrators who are not performing. So the system needs to do more, first to help those who need it, and ultimately to remove from the classroom and from schools those who cannot or will not perform. We have made recommendations to make teaching and managing at the school building level more rewarding, both financially and professionally.

We have reviewed the management of schools. We found a desire for change on the part of many people, but a system in which there are significant impediments to change. Both teachers and principals spoke of having to plead and lobby for materials and supplies from a central office that, in turn, causes them to spend a great deal of time responding to edicts and directives. We found a central office that today is neither efficient nor effective. It is simply non-responsive to schools and their needs. We identified opportunities to streamline central administration in order to provide more

resources directly to schools. We propose achieving these savings over a multi-year period through hiring freezes, early retirement, and the reallocation of the workforce to schools. No layoffs are proposed.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent are held responsible for the performance of a school system over which they have no ultimate financial control. The Committee's management recommendations call for explicit goals, clearly established accountability, agreement among all city officials concerning a stable financing plan for schools, and the development of systems to monitor the health of the organization.

The Committee looked at the school system's physical facilities. The District's schools are suffering from years of deferred maintenance, and the Committee estimates the total repair bill to be roughly $150 million. In addition, we have estimated $30 million as the amount needed to provide air conditioning for the summer program.

The Committee believes that students and teachers need and deserve clean, safe, and well-equipped buildings in which to learn and work. If a roof leaks, if plaster is falling, if windows are broken, if facilities are unusable, the message that is unmistakably conveyed is that what's going on inside is not important. As a community, we must, at a minimum, provide buildings for our students and teachers that are decent and safe. Hence, the Committee has made rather far-reaching recommendations for changes in the way facilities are repaired and maintained.

When the Committee looked at finances, we discovered a paradox. On the one hand, we found a number of ways by which the school system can realize cost savings and become more efficient and we have made recommendations in line with our findings. On the other hand, while expenditures for other city services have increased significantly (in constant dollars) over the past eight years, spending on public education has experienced very little growth. As a result, contrary to popular myth, the District spends less on the education of children than most of the surrounding jurisdictions and the other cities we studied. The school system's capacity to deal with many of the problems it has identified has been hampered by funding constraints.

In summary, the Committee's key recommendations, explained in detail in this report, involve:

- Redesigning the school program—the teaching, curriculum, and testing—to achieve greater success for all children, with particular attention to the special needs of at-risk students.
- Reaching children early with higher quality programs so that students don't start school already behind.
- Keeping schools open until 6:00 P.M. to provide latch-key children with a safe alternative to the streets, offering fun and enriching activities that stimulate interest in school and, at the same time, offering remedial and other compensatory programs for those who are behind academically.
- Keeping schools open during the summer in order to provide enrichment programs and additional academic assistance for those who need to catch up with their peers, and to address the specific needs of children in the District.
- Strengthening the workforce so that the District attracts, and retains, the highest quality teachers and principals, trained to meet the special needs of District children.
- Repairing facilities so that they are decent and conducive to learning and send a positive message to children and teachers.
- Streamlining central management and

reducing its cost so that more dollars can be spent on children.

- Creating communitywide support for improvement, with the active involvement of all with a stake in the future of Washington, so that children know that we are behind them.

Our recommendations, when fully implemented over a multi-year period, represent a budget increase per year of about 12 percent (the equivalent of $67 million today). The Committee believes that the responsibility for providing the additional resources that we are recommending should be shared between the District government and the Federal government. The District's share represents less than 1 percent of its total budget. To finance capital items, we are suggesting long-term commitment of $25 million per year, the amount included in the 1990 budget, as well as the disposal of certain assets with the proceeds being used for building repairs.

Finally, we want to speak to something that many people in this community believe but few will talk about—and that is the notion that when it comes to the schools or to any of the larger social issues confronting us today, there is nothing that any of us can do that will make a difference.

Our Committee emphatically rejects this notion. We know that there are success stories in our school system on which to build. We know that there are cities with deeply troubled school systems that have made dramatic turnarounds and that have really embraced the idea of educational reform.

The RAND Corporation recently took a look at six cities where real change is occurring in the public school system and reached some interesting conclusions. One of the findings is directly relevant to Washington. The public, RAND said, will support fundamental change within a school system not because it is offered any whiz-bang curriculum or other educational panancea but because it comes to understand that if the school system doesn't succeed, the social and economic future of the community is at stake. The public wants to see progress but understands that real change doesn't happen overnight.

We need to be honest and realistic. There are no easy solutions and there has to be a recognition that we need to stay involved through the inevitable trial and error period that will be necessary if our school system is to improve.

The members of the D.C. Committee on Public Education are committed to change. We are in this for the long haul and that commitment must extend to everyone in the District of Columbia. The issue of public school reform must be raised to the top of our civic agenda and there it must remain for many years to come.

That is the challenge. Each of us has a role to play. The problems will not be solved by the Board of Education, or by Dr. Jenkins, or by our Committee, or by the Mayor and City Council, or indeed by even the most committed parents and teachers. It requires that all of us work together for excellence in our schools.

Sincerely,

Carmen E. Turner
Co-chairman

Terence C. Golden
Co-chairman

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Committee share a vision for the future of the D.C. Public School System. This vision is based on a common set of beliefs:

- All children can learn.
- In order to be successful, principals, teachers, parents, and students themselves should have high expectations for student performance.
- In order for significant change to take place, it must occur at the school level; teachers, principals, and parents should be given the freedom and encouragement to become innovative and to discover new ways to meet the individual needs of their students.
- The role of the central office is to support change; increasingly, the central office must view itself as an organization that responds to the needs of individual schools.
- The school system needs to recognize the unique needs of the children of the District of Columbia and redesign the system to meet those needs. The specific needs that must be addressed were outlined by the Commission on Values-Centered Goals and reflect the fact that a high percentage of students live below the poverty level, are affected by the drug problem, face risks from teenage pregnancy, and need support in such basic areas as nutrition, values, and self-esteem.
- Although parental involvement has proven difficult to achieve in some neighborhoods, it is essential that parents be involved in the education of their children and that efforts be undertaken to increase parental involvement.
- The school system must be responsive to the taxpayers. It must be as efficient as possible, functioning more like the half-a-billion dollar business it is. It must have leadership, set specific goals, develop a strong and motivated workforce and be accountable to the taxpayers for its expenditures and performance.
- The heart of a good school system is its teachers and principals. If a school system is to be effective, it must attract and retain high-quality teachers and principals and effectively deal with those few employees who are not performing.
- Resources must be allocated based on the needs of students.
- The school system must recognize the diversity of its student population and design programs that provide appropriate services for each population. Of particular concern is meeting the needs of the system's at-risk, non-English speaking, and learning-disabled populations.
- Creating the proper school climate is essential. In order to accomplish this, school facilities must be attractive and well maintained. There must be adequate security, discipline must be the norm, and students must attend classes.
- The teachers' union must be an active participant in the effort to improve schools. The union must be a true partner in developing and implementing improvements throughout the school system.
- If schools are to succeed, business and community leaders must support public education.

The shared vision is of a school system that:

- Equips students with the necessary skills in reading, science, and mathematics to compete effectively in the world of work and in higher education;
- Gives students a sense of their importance and value to the community, as well as high self-esteem;

- Instills in students a vision and sense of hope about their future;
- Gives students a grounding that enables them to understand their social, cultural, and historical roots and prepares them for the rapidly changing world in which they will live;
- Prepares students for a world in which rapid technological change is a certainty; and
- Prepares students to become active and engaged citizens with all the rights and responsibilities that that role entails.

A Vision of the Future

1. The D.C. Committee on Public Education believes that the D.C. public schools should, as part of a five-year plan, set several specific, measurable goals with respect to achievement, attainment, attendance, facilities, the workforce, and efficiency.

Based on discussions with the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and citizens in the community, the Committee recommends that the Board consider adopting the following goals:

(a) By 1994, D.C. student academic performance at the elementary and secondary levels on the comprehensive tests of basic skills should reach at least the 50th percentile in all subjects tested.

(b) By 1994, the graduation rate in the D.C. public schools should exceed 80 percent.

(c) By 1994, the attendance rates in grades 7 through 12 should exceed 92 percent.

(d) By 1994, the school system's buildings and grounds should be in good repair and a program should be in place to maintain and periodically upgrade them.

(e) By 1992, a system should be in place that supports the recruitment and retention of a high-quality workforce of teachers and principals and effectively deals with nonperforming employees.

(f) By 1994, the school system should be an efficient and cost-effective deliverer of services, and it should have reduced central operating costs by $8.5 million per year and central staff by 400 positions, including redeploying staff to schools.

2. In order to gain a greater sense of unity of purpose, the D.C. public schools should ensure that all aspects of the educational program—curriculum, instruction, training, and testing—are carefully integrated derive from the School Board's fundamental goals and overall vision for the school system, and are adequately communicated to all school system employees.

Major Educational Reforms: Children Come First

3. The District of Columbia should provide quality early childhood programs for all at-risk three- to six-year-olds by:

(a) Upgrading the quality of early childhood programs through a number of reforms pertaining to curriculum, the availability of staff, and the provision and coordination of comprehensive services, training, and the setting of higher standards.

(b) Extending programs to reach all low-income three- and four-year-olds currently not being served, including the provision of before- and after-school programs.

(c) Lowering the compulsory attendance age to five years of age.

(d) Requiring that all children receive a

comprehensive set of health, psychological, and educational assessments to enable the school system to better meet the needs of each child.

4. The District of Columbia public schools should improve the quality and diversity of school offerings by: identifying model programs and practices within the school system and making that information available to all schools; establishing a series of special schools, located throughout the city, each of which would be based upon its own unique curriculum or educational approach, with a focus at the junior and senior high levels; and ultimately, over the long-term, providing greater choice to parents and students in the selection of programs and schools.

5. The District of Columbia should take steps to revitalize its curricula, including:

Concerning the core curricula:

(a) Contract with a series of subject-based outside groups with no vested interest in the current Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) program to review and revise the curriculum, with the following objectives:

(1) Reduce the number of detailed objectives while still providing general guidance to teachers on curriculum;

(2) Adjust the syllabus so that it reflects the best that is currently known about teaching, learning, and assessment in particular subject areas, including a richer reading program with a stronger emphasis on writing, the teaching of higher order comprehension skills, and an emphasis on mathematics concepts at least equal to the current emphasis on computation; and

(3) Ensure that the curriculum and testing programs are fully integrated.

Concerning elementary education:

(b) Replace the current assessment program for mathematics with state-of-the-art tests that are integral to instruction itself. New tests should provide students and teachers with prompt feedback, allowing teachers to pinpoint student misunderstandings and correct their instruction accordingly. New tests should test students' ability to apply mathematics to the solution of real-life problems.

(c) Take a position, based on research and knowledge of best practices in reading instruction, on essential components of a strong reading program and the range of permissible approaches to the teaching of reading. Whether reading textbooks are selected centrally or left to the discretion of local schools, the school system should identify and support a limited number of reading textbooks that reflect practices known to promote growth in reading.

(d) Mandate the teaching of inquiry-based science in all elementary schools, to be phased in over a period of three to five years. As a part of the school-based staff development program, principals should identify those teachers in their schools who can teach inquiry-based science, or are willing to learn. The school system should identify those schools with outstanding programs and assist in the dissemination of knowledge and skill in elementary science teaching and assessment. Periodically, the school system should administer performance tests in science and provide funds for elementary, hands-on science laboratories, equipment, and materials.

(e) Mandate art, music, physical education, and foreign language programs in all elementary schools.

Concerning secondary education:

(f) Increase graduation requirements for all students not enrolled in special education by requiring two years of a foreign language (one year currently), two years of laboratory science (one year currently), and world history.

(g) Reorganize the entire mathematics sequence so that children study each aspect of mathematics in more depth, at a greater pace, and with less repetition of rudimentary skills. Algebra should be introduced during the elementary school sequence so that students are prepared for junior and senior high school material. Mathematics textbooks should be chosen to reflect these notions of greater depth, less repetition, and earlier exposure to more complex mathematics. All high schools should offer a course in calculus. Peer coaching of junior and senior high school mathematics teachers should be an essential component of a revised mathematics sequence.

(h) Expand and enrich systemwide policies and training programs regarding writing. The system should require students to write more frequently and enable teachers to use the best practices in the teaching of writing across the curriculum. Because one of the major obstacles to a strong writing program is the out-of-school time teachers must spend grading written work, the school system should devise additional measures to reduce the gradi[illegible]den on teachers, either through [illegible] laboratories, reduced class loads, [illegible]ployment of lay readers.

(i) Make available to a[illegible]-school students the option of tak[illegible]dvanced placement cou[illegible]s, at leas[illegible]n English and mathematics. Moreover, there should be some systemwide prerequisites for admission to advanced placement courses, such as a passing grade in prior courses and a specified level of reading competence. Without such admission standards, advanced placement courses are advanced in name only, and the more able students in the class may not be adequately prepared for college.

Concerning vocational education:

(j) Appoint a panel of outstanding citizens and experts in vocational education to review the current vocational offerings.

Concerning bilingual education:

(k) Recognize and expand existing two-way bilingual programs by establishing programs in all parts of the city. The curriculum in bilingual education schools should be aligned with the overall school curriculum so that all students have access to material in the content areas.

(l) Support model programs addressing unique needs of bilingual students, such as the Multicultural Intern Program.

(m) Provide special training for teachers in schools with large numbers of bilingual students and increase the numbers of bilingual teachers and administrators in those schools.

Concerning special education:

(n) Recognize the special and specific educational needs of children with minimal learning disabilities, and mount appropriate special classes and mainstream placements for them.

Recognizing the importance of providing a quality special education program and the high cost of delivering certain aspects of the program, the school system should conduct an in-depth review of this area.

Concerning student self-esteem and values:

(o) Implement the recommendations of the Commission on Values-Centered Goals.

(p) Provide training for teachers concerning the teaching of values to children and methods of establishing and communicating high expectations in all aspects of school.

(q) Recognizing that the learning of values and the acquisition of self-esteem stem in large part from success in school, the Committee notes that other recommendations link directly with improving self-esteem and teaching values, including:

- ❑ Making school interesting and raising standards;
- ❑ Providing enrichment programs during the summer and after school; and
- ❑ Beginning the educational experience with sound early childhood programs to enhance the likelihood of success.

(r) Introduce African-American materials and teaching throughout the curricula, beginning with early childhood programs, in order to promote self-esteem.

(s) Form links with those states and school districts that have already adopted new curricular mandates in the area of multicultural education to form a market powerful enough to induce publishers to develop appropriate textbooks. In the meantime, the school system should collaborate with local universities on the development of its own materials to supplement the existing curriculum and surmount the deficiencies in existing textbooks.

(t) Design training materials that empower school faculties to choose textbooks and other instructional materials that are highly motivating to students. The training materials should reflect new knowledge about the characteristics of effective textbooks. The number of textbooks should be limited, calibrated with testing, consistent with training of teachers, and tied into systemwide goals (e.g., multicultural curriculum).

Concerning technology:

(u) Expand efforts to use instructional technology, including computers, on an experimental and pilot basis to increase the academic performance of students.

6. The District of Columbia should upgrade its standards for student performance by introducing performance tests for writing, mathematics, and science, and by issuing an honors diploma for high achievers who will be required to maintain a certain average, take additional courses (e.g., 23 Carnegie units), and perhaps pass a Regents-type examination.

Further, the District of Columbia should revise its practice of automatic in-grade retention for children failing to meet certain requirements in elementary and junior high school, and substitute a case-by-case review combined with a comprehensive and sophisticated tutoring program after school and during the summers, and special programs such as low student/teacher ratio classes for students who are falling behind their peers at a particular grade level. Retention in grade is recognized as a major cause of dropouts.

7. The District of Columbia should revise guidelines and programs related to the discipline of students in the following ways. First, for hard-core, serious offenders who return from a suspension, attendance in alternative programs, created and made available by the school system, should be mandatory. Counseling also should be

mandatory. A student should be required to "graduate" from this alternative program before returning to one of the other high schools in the school system. Ultimately, anyone who fails to respond in this alternative environment, and continues to cause severe problems for fellow students and teachers, must be expelled.

The District of Columbia should set a systemwide attendance policy that would require a student not to miss class more than x days in order to pass a course or be promoted to the next grade. This attendance policy should be structured to permit reasonable exceptions.

The District of Columbia should revise its policy for participation in athletic events to require students to maintain a C average in the semester immediately preceding the one in which participation in sports will occur, rather than a cumulative C average.

8. The school system should make several changes to improve the use of the existing instructional day, including:

(a) Reduce programs that pull children out of classes for remediation in the same subject. Eligible schools should use remedial funds to support schoolwide adoption of instructional practices known to be effective with at-risk children. Remedial assistance should be provided after school, during the summer, and through select pull-out activities that increase the time and quality of overall instruction.

(b) Revise transportation schedules to allow student participation in sporting events but not at the expense of instructional time.

(c) Restructure, to the extent possible, periods of time devoted to organizing the school year, holding holiday events, and carrying on the traditional activities following end-of-year testing.

(d) Take other steps to minimize downtime and interruptions including providing schools with the flexibility to organize their own periods and schedules.

9. The school system should lengthen the school day by:

(a) Proposing the expansion of the instructional day at the high school level by one-half hour, beginning with the 1990-91 school year.

(b) Keeping schools open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. by the 1991-92 school year. This expansion will allow for child care activities (ages three to six), a full range of co-curricula activities, study halls, and remediation. An implementation plan should be developed and this process should involve a number of agencies within the District of Columbia, including the Department of Recreation. Student participation should be voluntary, except for certain mandatory remediation programs.

10. The school system should lengthen the school year by offering a summer program in coordination with the Mayor's youth employment program and the Department of Recreation. The summer school program should involve:

(a) By 1993, expanding the school year from 180 days to 200 days, with the additional 20 days to be used for mandatory remediation, and for enrichment and extracurricula activities. Participation in the latter would be voluntary.

(b) By 1994, expanding the school year to 220 days by offering programs during the summer to be used for remediation and enrichment during the morning and for sports activities, field trips, and employment-related events in the afternoon.

The summer school program would be designed to provide activities and models for children that would promote their overall success in school in an environment that differs from the traditional classroom. The program should respond to the particular needs of at-risk children.

11. The school system should undertake a full-scale reform of the athletic program, focusing on facilities, personnel, and equipment. The Committee endorses a broad plan set out by an internal school system task force that addressed this issue. In general, there should be: better pay for coaches, an upgrading of standards, adequate equipment and supplies, and the use of paid personnel to run effective intramural programs after school.

Teachers: The Heart of Effective Schools

12. The District of Columbia public schools should adopt a revised compensation and promotion package for teachers that will enable the District to recruit and retain a quality workforce and be competitive with surrounding jurisdictions by adopting:

- Career ladders, which will differentiate staffing patterns to enable the most capable to assume additional roles and responsibilities that will help upgrade the overall quality of the workforce;
- Incentive pay on a schoolwide basis, where all employees in a school will receive bonuses when the school exceeds its objectives;
- Greater options for 12-month contracts to staff a full-scale summer program;
- Greater remuneration for extracurricula activities to support an effective after-school program; and
- Pay differentials for certain difficult-to-fill positions: math and science at the secondary level, bilingual education, and special education.

13. As one of the conditions for overall reform, and as a precondition for an enhanced compensation package, the school system should seek to strengthen its workforce by:

- Mandating use of the entire National Teacher's Exam, as revised, for entry-level personnel.
- Adopting an alternative certification program whereby individuals possessing skills and knowledge in particular areas, but not holding a teaching certificate, will be able to teach in schools under certain conditions.
- Revising its performance evaluation system to reward superior teachers and to remove from the classroom those teachers who cannot or will not perform satisfactorily even after they have been given appropriate inservice training and assistance. The evaluation system should involve teachers reviewing the performance of fellow teachers.
- Involving teachers more directly in the overall management of schools.

14. The District of Columbia public school system competes directly for qualified teachers, especially minority teachers, with the five major suburban jurisdictions. The school system should strengthen its recruitment procedurps to increase the applicant pool, and it should eliminate the residency requirement, or preference system, which serves as a barrier to working in the D.C. public schools and puts the city at a competitive disadvantage vis-a-vis the suburban jurisdictions.

15. The in-service training program within the District should be revised by:

- Developing a comprehensive training plan and program at the central level that will facilitate overall reform, consistent with goals set by the Board of Education; is coordinated with curriculum and testing; and reflects the best practices of teaching children with the needs evidenced in the District of Columbia;
- Placing greater responsibility for staff development at the school building level; and
- Setting standards for appropriate training activities.

In particular, the school system—in partnership with individual schools—should mount and support a sustained, coherent, program of school-based staff development designed to help teachers employ a repertoire of teaching strategies designed to motivate and get students seriously involved in school work. Such a program should involve:

- Training for principals in the identification of skilled teachers in their own schools;
- Allocation of resources to relieve skilled teachers so they can work with other teachers within their own schools;
- Provision of expert assistance to assist teacher-trainers in local schools; and
- Systemwide designation of demonstration schools where excellent instruction can be observed and practiced.

School Management: A Redirection

16. The Committee firmly believes that the District of Columbia public school system should support a school-based management system that places greater authority and responsibility within individual schools. Implementation of this program should proceed immediately, beginning with a broad program in several schools over the next several years. The purpose of this effort is to develop a climate for change among teachers, parents, and principals and have them work together to improve education. This effort will be the centerpiece of the reform effort, and will involve providing greater authority to individual schools for such items as budgeting, curricula, facilities, and personnel.

17. The Committee offers the following recommendations with respect to the governance of the school system:

(a) In order to set clear public accountability for schools in the District, both policy responsibility and financial responsibility over the long-term need to rest with a single entity, the Board of Education. The Committee therefore recommends that the city and the Board of Education reach an agreement to provide broad, stable financial support for schools over a multi-year period. In this way, the Board would become the accountable organization for education. If a firm agreement cannot be reached concerning the financing of schools, the parties should then provide the Board with taxing authority. Under this authority, the Board should have the power to seek increased funding for particular school improvements, on top of any existing financial base, through the levying of additional taxes and/or revenue raising measures.

(b) As part of the effort to introduce school-based management and overall reform, the central office needs to become more efficient and service oriented so that each school can reach its maximum potential.

Further, the school system needs to undertake efforts to professionalize cen-

tral level management, particularly with respect to the performance of support functions.

The Committee recommends streamlining administrative and overhead functions within the school system, ultimately reducing 400 positions for an annual savings of $8.5 million. This streamlining should use the Peat Marwick study as the basis for identifying specific actions to be taken. The reductions will be accomplished over several years and will use attrition, early retirement, and transfers to available positions in schools.

(c) As the central office becomes more efficient and assumes greater day-to-day control over the operations of the school system, there will be an opportunity for the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to establish a clearer definition of roles and responsibilities. The Board of Education needs to function as the equivalent of a Board of Directors; the Superintendent of Schools needs to function as the chief executive officer. As the central office becomes more effective in the operations of the school system, the Board of Education should reassess its organization with the goal of streamlining it and simplifying overall relationships with the central office. This reassessment might include reducing the size of the staff, reducing the number of committees, and reducing interaction in the day-to-day supervision of the school system.

(d) The Committee supports the current efforts of the school system to carry out its operations independent of other city agencies. In that regard, the Committee endorses the school system's assumption of greater responsibility for the capital program and for managing its assets. Most important, the school system should be able to retain receipts from the disposal of properties for the purpose of repairing and rehabilitating the existing inventory of buildings.

18. The Committee recommends several measures to improve the overall management of the school system, including:

(a) Upgrading the principal corps within the District by increasing compensation, providing better developmental and training programs, and employing procedures that will remove those who are not meeting goals and requirements;

(b) Transferring responsibility for adult education to the University of the District of Columbia; and

(c) Upgrading management information systems so that basic information necessary to manage the enterprise will be available on a timely basis, including the provision of a records center and the keeping of good records.

19. The Committee recommends creation of a broad-based independent organization, a new organization also to be named the D.C. Committee on Public Education, to support public education activities in the District in the following ways:

- Provide funding for special projects;
- Increase community awareness of the public schools;
- Support the budget for education before the City Council and the Congress;
- Monitor the progress of the school system and the implementation of the plan;
- Provide support to the school system and the Board of Education, as requested; and
- Provide technical expertise as requested.

20. To make the school system accountable to the public, all schools will report accomplishments and results under a prescribed system, with an emphasis on student performance and improvement over time. This information—progress of individual students, schools, and the system—will be made available to the public in the form of an annual schoolwide report card.

Facilities: The Need for Better Buildings

21. The school system should engage in a five-year modernization program to eliminate the backlog in deferred maintenance and repairs at an estimated cost of $150 million. In addition, the Committee recommends allocating an estimated $30 million for air conditioning for the summer program.

22. To finance a significant portion of this repair effort, and to reduce the overall operating cost of the schools, the Committee recommends the disposal and/or consolidation of about 10 facilities through existing procedures established by the Board of Education. The Committee recommends that the Board set a target of $50 million to be realized through the sale of assets. The Committee recommends a legislative change to permit the Board to retain funds realized by the sale of properties, said funds to be used exclusively for the purpose of repairing and rehabilitating the system's buildings and grounds.

23. To accomplish an effective facilities maintenance program, the school system should: place greater authority and responsibility with the individual schools, use private sector resources to perform repairs through task order arrangements, and revise the operations of the central office. The central office should serve as a quality control function, oversee major repair projects, and carry out certain operations best performed by central maintenance crews, with the latter function being turned over to the private sector over time.

In addition, the community should consider, as part of establishing a new D.C. Committee on Public Education, the provision of assistance in carrying out the facilities improvement plan from the private sector. The exact role and responsibilities of a new organization in the area of facilities will need to be determined.

Financing: How to Pay for a Better School System

24. If the school system is to receive additional resources from the taxpayers and community, a quid pro quo must be established, whereby the school system shows evidence of becoming more efficient and develops the capacity to carry out the improvements outlined in this plan. Further, the school system must begin to allocate funds based on need.

The additional operating budget requirements (net of savings) are as follows:

Year	Amount	Percent Increase Above 1990	
1990	—	–	
1991	$33 million	6%	
1992	$47 million	8%	
1993	$58 million	9%	
1994	$82 million	12%	(Stable)

The program will be financed by:

(a) An increase in the Federal payment in those years covering approximately 50 percent of the total costs (net of sav-

ings), all of which should be devoted to education;

(b) Additional revenues from existing city sources to cover the additional 50 percent of costs;

(c) Savings from the existing operations of the school system of $13.5 million annually (included in the above); and

(d) Increased support from the private sector and public foundations and universities targeted at: strengthening individual schools and programs and carrying out specific functions under the newly constituted D.C. Committee on Public Education.

These increased revenues would be raised over a multi-year period.

25. To finance the capital recommendations, the Committee recommends continuation of the 1990 annual level of $25 million in the city's capital budget and generating receipts of $50 million from the disposal of school system properties at public auction.

Implementation: How to Begin

The Committee recognizes that the actions outlined above represent a multi-year plan that requires phasing of programs and efforts.

Key initial implementation steps, to be accomplished within the next year, include:

(a) Create a broad-based independent organization to support public education activities in the District in the following ways:

- Provide funding for special projects;
- Increase the community's awareness of the importance of the public schools;
- Support the budget for education before the City Council and the Congress;
- Monitor the progress of the school system and the implementation of the plan through the conduct of an annual audit;
- Provide support to the school system and the Board of Education, as requested; and
- Provide technical expertise, as requested, in carrying out specific tasks, such as helping to repair facilities.

(b) Establish specific, measurable goals for the school system;

(c) Initiate school-based management programs in at least 20 schools;

(d) With the support of an outside expert, such as Dr. James Comer of Yale University, develop programs at the elementary level with comprehensive services and initiate planning of "schools with specific themes" at the junior and senior high levels;

(e) Plan for a totally restructured summer program that will be introduced in the summer of 1990;

(f) Initiate a major effort to repair facilities, including carrying out a $20-million repair program, providing all schools with adequate materials to implement a sound maintenance program; and beginning efforts to raise monies to finance repairs through disposal of assets;

(g) Reduce central operations by 100 staff for a savings of $2 million;

(h) Negotiate among all parties, particularly unions and school system management, concerning implementation of career ladders and school reform, including renegotiation of the contract to remove provisions that may prohibit true reform from occurring;

(i) Enact legislation lowering compulsory attendance age;

(j) Plan for after-school programs;

(k) Reach agreement on the early childhood program with all segments of the city; beginning implementation of the specific projects to upgrade the quality of early childhood education;

(l) Strengthen teacher recruitment program in partnership with the business community; and

(m) Undertake efforts to upgrade the curriculum and the quality of instruction.

I. AN INTRODUCTION: A VISION OF THE FUTURE

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMITTEE

Over the past seven months, at the request of the D.C. Superintendent of Schools, the D.C. Committee on Public Education has undertaken an intensive examination of all aspects of the public school system in the District of Columbia. The Committee's purpose was to develop a plan, based upon its evaluation, to help strengthen the public schools in the District.

The Committee, whose members are listed in Appendix A, represents a broad coalition drawn from the business and professional communities, the churches, the universities, parents, and nationally recognized experts in education.

The Committee's report reflects its independent conclusions; however, the information contained in the report, the ideas for improvements, the descriptions of the successful programs in the District, and the assessment of the problems that the school system faces are a product of the D.C. Public School System, starting with the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools and including principals and teachers in the schools throughout the city.

Throughout the project, the Committee worked closely with the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

In undertaking a project of this scope and magnitude, the Committee relied on several broad strategies.

First, the Committee was purposely structured to include members with particular knowledge and expertise, as well as broad-based representation within the community. Members served on subcommittees of particular interest and/or where their expertise could be brought to bear.

For example, Dr. William L. Smith, the Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education and former Director of the Teacher Corps program, chaired the Teaching Profession Subcommittee, which examined the teaching workforce and ways to recruit and to retain high-quality teachers in the District.

Oliver T. Carr and James S. Williams of the Oliver Carr Company chaired the Facilities Subcommittee, which evaluated the state of repair of existing facilities and developed a facilities plan for the school system.

Dr. Vincent E. Reed of the Washington Post Company, a former D.C. Superintendent of Schools, chaired the Educating the Child Subcommittee, which examined issues related to the curriculum, the quality of instruction, and the overall educational program offered students in the District. Dr. Richard Berendzen, President of The American University, and Dr. Rafael L. Cortada, President of the University of the District of Columbia, chaired focus groups on early childhood education and expansion of the school day and school year.

Togo West, a partner with the firm of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler and a former General Counsel in the Department of Defense, chaired the Management and Organization Subcommittee, which reviewed the administration of the school system and opportunities to improve its efficiency.

Father John P. Whalen, President of University Support Services and former President of Catholic University, chaired the Finance Subcommittee, which reviewed the budget for the school system and determined the costs of the improvements that the Committee is recommending.

Parent members, who are knowledgeable about individual schools and the needs of children, were able to bring their expertise to the numerous discussions held throughout the project.

In addition to carefully selecting its members and creating a series of working subcommittees, the Committee determined that a prime goal should be to learn from

the parents, teachers, principals, and administrators working in the system. To this end, it:

- Visited schools, spoke to students, and attended classes;
- Held a series of town meetings covering all wards of the city that were attended by over 1,000 teachers, parents, principals, students, and administrators;
- Surveyed over 1,200 teachers concerning working conditions and their impact on the education of children;
- Interviewed principals, administrators, and the members of Board of Education, as well as other city officials, concerning the operations of the school system; and
- Held small-group discussion sessions with teachers, principals, and other school officials.

Each subcommittee carried out its own set of tasks. For example, the Facilities Subcommittee formed teams of volunteers from the real estate and construction industries, as well as from the Federal government. These volunteers visited and surveyed every public school building in the District. The Teaching Profession Subcommittee employed consultants and individual experts to review compensation in the surrounding jurisdictions and in other cities, examine incentive pay systems in cities across the country, review evaluation and certification systems for teachers, and analyze existing recruiting practices in the school system.

The Committee used consultants and experts on specific topics throughout the project. Peat Marwick Main & Co. performed an operational review of the school system's administrative and support functions at the request of the Committee and the Superintendent of Schools. In that review, they interviewed managers throughout the school system and conducted a comprehensive analysis of the support functions. Peat Marwick Main & Co. also reviewed the school system's budget. Education consultants, under the direction of the Institute for Educational Leadership and EDA Systems, reviewed testing procedures, curriculum, the quality of instruction, and other aspects of the educational program.

In all its reviews, the Committee compared the District's practices and programs with those in the surrounding jurisdictions and in other urban areas, focusing on a number of cities that are developing a reputation for improving their schools. Committee members, consultants, and members of the Board of Education visited Pittsburgh, PA; Norfolk, VA; and East Harlem, NY. Committee members and staff also visited other districts, including Miami, FL; Prince George's County, MD; New Haven, CT; Rochester, NY; and Toledo, OH.

The Committee also met with a number of nationally known education experts, including Dr. James P. Comer of Yale University; Barbara Bowman of the Erickson Institute; Dr. Ted Sizer of Brown University; Dr. Willie Herenton, Superintendent of Schools in Memphis, TN; and Dr. Gene Carter, Superintendent of Schools in Norfolk, VA.

In summary, the Committee used a wide variety of approaches and techniques to reach an understanding of the status of the school system today and the opportunities for improvement.

B. PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee has a vision for the D.C. Public School System; that vision is based on a series of very specific beliefs.

First, the Committee believes that all children can learn. It has listened to experts and has seen enough results, both in the District and elsewhere, to convince it that all children have the capacity to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to succeed in society.

Second, for the school system to be successful, principals, teachers, parents, and students must have high expectations for student performance. The Committee found that where expectations are low, children do not achieve. But where expectations are high, where everyone in a school believes that the children can achieve, the results can be remarkable.

Third, for significant change to take place, it must occur at the level of the individual school; teachers, principals, and parents should be given the freedom and encouragement to become innovative and to discover new ways to meet the individual needs of their students. The Committee saw too many examples of reform efforts that did not reach down to schools; that is, they focused solely on policies or central administration. The Committee recognizes what should be obvious—that teaching and learning occur in schools.

Fourth, the role of the central office is to be supportive of change, and increasingly the central office must view itself as an organization that responds to the needs of individual schools. In those school systems where improvements are occurring, superintendents speak persuasively about the need to transform the role of the central office. The Committee recognizes that this is a challenge for any large organization, but it is essential for school improvement.

Fifth, the school system needs to recognize the unique needs of the children of the District and to design the system to meet those needs. The specific needs that must be addressed were outlined by the Commission on Values-Centered Goals and reflect the fact that a high percentage of students live below the poverty level, are affected by the drug problem, face risks from teenage pregnancy, and are in need of support in such basic areas as nutrition, values, and self-esteem.

Sixth, although the Committee recognizes that parental involvement has proved difficult to achieve both throughout the country and in the District, it is essential that parents be involved in the education of their children and that efforts be undertaken to increase parental involvement. Where programs work, parents are involved. They reinforce what goes on in school, and they help to set expectations for their children.

Seventh, as a public agency, the school system must be responsive to the taxpayers. It must be as efficient as possible, functioning like the $500-million-a-year business that it is. It must have leadership, set specific goals, develop a strong and motivated workforce, and be accountable to the public for its expenditures and performance.

Eighth, the heart of a good school system is its teachers and principals. If a school system is to be effective, it must attract and retain high-quality teachers and principals and effectively deal with those few employees who are not performing. The Committee had the opportunity to see first-hand the excellent work of teachers and principals in the District and in other school systems. It also saw concerted efforts to strengthen instruction by investing in staff. Such investments are essential.

Ninth, resources must be allocated on the basis of the needs of students. There can be no simple formula for distributing funds and talent that does not recognize needs.

Indeed, the Committee firmly believes that those with the greatest needs require the most attention and investment.

Tenth, the school system must recognize the diversity of its student populations and design programs that provide appropriate services for each population. Meeting the needs of the system's low-income, non-English-speaking, and learning-disabled populations is of particular concern. Too frequently, in the schools visited in the District and elsewhere, the philosophy appeared to be that a uniform approach results in equity. In fact, the reverse is true. When programs are alike, children with unique needs and requirements are not served.

Eleventh, the proper school climate is essential. School facilities must be attractive and well maintained and materials and equipment must be available and of high-quality. Adequate security and a strong sense of order and discipline in the schools are essential. Also, students must attend school.

Twelfth, it is essential that the teachers' union be actively involved in all improvement efforts. In each city examined by the Committee where school reform efforts are underway, the teachers' union was either the leader of the improvement effort or an active partner with school officials and interested citizens. In fact, a central conclusion of this study is that no reform effort can be successful without the active collaboration of the teachers' union.

Thirteenth, business and community leaders must support public education if schools are to succeed. These leaders must provide funds, technical resources, staff, and motivation; further, the assistance must be focused and integrated into the overall activities of the school system.

From these beliefs, the Committee envisions a school system that:

- Equips students with the necessary skills in reading, science, and mathematics to compete effectively in the world of work and in higher education;
- Gives students a sense of their importance and value to the community, as well as help them to develop high self-esteem;
- Gives students a sense of hope about their futures;
- Gives students a grounding that enables them to understand their social, cultural, and historical roots and prepares them for the rapidly changing world in which they will live;
- Prepares students for a world in which rapid technological change is an absolute certainty; and
- Prepares students to become active and engaged citizens with all the rights and responsibilities that such a role entails.

(A more detailed description of this vision is described in Appendix D.)

C. THE MANDATE FOR REFORM

(1.) History of Public Schools in the District of Columbia: An Observation

The D.C. Public School System has a long, rich history. The first public schools were established shortly after the Federal government moved to its new capital city. By the late 1800s, public education had become one of the basic services provided by the District government.

During the struggle for desegregation, prominent Howard University lawyers and other civil rights leaders led efforts to integrate the public school system and provide equal opportunities for African-American students. These efforts affected not only Washington, DC, but also the entire nation.

Schools played a major part in the quest for home rule; members of the Board of Education were the first elected public officials in Washington, DC, and a major part of the effort to provide a degree of political autonomy for the citizens of the District.

(2.) Potential in the School System

Although the District shares many of the problems of other large urban school systems, it has a number of characteristics that will facilitate improvement.

First, there is a tradition of excellence. Dunbar High School, as well as a number of other schools throughout the city, have produced some of the city's and the country's most accomplished leaders in the fields of business, industry, law, and government.

Second, the District has exhibited a willingness to tackle difficlult issues. For example, responding to the needs of at-risk students, the District system is one of the few school systems in the country and the only system in the region to offer full-day, prekindergarten programs in virtually every school in the city.

Third, the size of the school system is manageable. Unlike New York, for example, with almost 1 million students, the District's system has fewer than 89,000 students.

Fourth, there are significant financial resources available in the District, including the Federal government, the city, and the private sector. Although the District government is currently facing some difficult financial constraints, the overall economy remains strong and has been for the past six years.

Fifth, the District is home to large numbers of talented professionals in government, the military, and private business. These individuals would, if energized, be able to offer talent and help to the school system.

Sixth, and most important, there are many talented principals and teachers in the District's schools. For example, Princess Whitfield, the principal of Hine Junior High School, has lead a transformation, as described by Ronald White of The Washington Post, "from an underenrolled and unpopular school with only 296 students to one that now draws 719 students from across the city. When then-U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett published a report on effective schools around the nation, he chose to highlight Hine as an example of effectively establishing order within a troubled school."

Several elementary schools have state-of-the-art science programs where children learn science not through memorizing facts but through inquiry and experience.

Other elementary schools offer high-quality mathematics programs that promote thinking about mathematics, make it concrete and practical, and engage children in problems worth solving.

At Shepherd Elementary School there is an innovative program known as "Paideia," which promotes critical thinking and values among youth.

Thus, when the Committee thinks about the challenges that the school system faces and the future, it starts with a sense of real hope.

(3.) The Environmental Challenges that the System Faces

During the project, the Committee heard from a number of scholars, including Barbara Bowman of the Erickson Institute, on the subject of at-risk children. For the purposes of this study, the Committee defined at-risk as those students who are likely candidates for school failure. Barbara Bowman defined these candidates as handicapped children, children who do not speak English, children who receive inadequate care, children whose families are irresponsible, poor children, children who mature at slower rates, and many minority children.

Biological factors contribute to being at risk. In the District, there are large numbers of children born with low birth weight, as well as children born to mothers who used drugs or alcohol during pregnancy. There are also significant numbers of handicapped children. However, most children do not become at risk because of biological factors. Rather, they do not have a set of experiences that contribute to the healthy development essential to school success.

Children from low-income families, for example, frequently lack the role models for achievement either in the home or in the community. Life for these children is often highly stressful; education is not seen as a source of hope for their futures.

At-risk children often fall behind early and come to see themselves as failures. Schools, instead of reversing this trend, frequently perpetuate it by failing to engage children in meaningful, supportive activities. Dr. James Comer of Yale University speaks eloquently about the conflict in cultures between the school and low-income families. There are significant barriers between a middle class teacher and children from low-income families.

Too often, an at-risk child's knowledge of the world is extremely limited and focuses on the immediate neighborhood. Also, too often, parents cannot help; they may have dropped out of school themselves, and may see little benefit to education.

There is also evidence, based on a wide range of research, that some minority children find success in school difficult because their cultural style is different from that of the dominant school culture.

If children see school as an alien place, one that is uncaring and unfriendly, failure is almost preordained. Children cannot be expected to work hard in such an environment. Hence, the Committee believes that one of the main tasks of the school system is to confront these environmental challenges directly. The school system must take into account the conditions experienced by many of its students, not ignore these realities.

The single most striking challenge facing the D.C. Public School System is the enormous concentration of at-risk students who have special educational needs—because of handicaps, because of a lack of proficiency in English, and because of poverty, with all its associated disadvantages.

- Three-fifths of the students in the elementary schools come from families whose income is low enough for them to qualify for free school lunch.
- Almost one-fourth of the elementary school population is welfare dependent.
- Eight percent of total enrollment has been identified as handicapped.

- Officials told the Committee that the primary language for over 6,000 students is not English.

Poverty is concentrated in the District, and school enrollments reflect this reality. Almost 30 percent of the elementary schools enroll more than 75 percent low-income children. About 70 percent of the schools enroll 50 percent or more low-income children. About 90 percent of the schools enroll 20 percent or more low-income children. (See Figure I-1.)

If the D.C. Public School System used the same standards as Montgomery County, MD, to target Federal funds for compensatory education, 89 percent of the elementary schools in the District would receive extra funds for instructing disadvantaged children.

The issue of parental involvement in schools relates to poverty, and a number of concerns of the school system are derived from the issue. Despite the efforts of the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, and many principals, by most measures parental involvement remains relatively low. Attendance at PTAs in many schools is poor, and many schools have few parent volunteers.

In some schools, the number of single-parent households exceeds 70 percent. The challenges facing those parents and their children are acute. Working single parents have limited time to devote to their children and to reinforce activities at school.

The infant mortality rate of 20.8 per 1,000 live births is the highest rate in the country. Recently, up to one-third of the children born at D.C. General Hospital had health and developmental problems directly related to their mother's use of drugs and alcohol during pregnancy. Many of the schools are just now beginning to see the impact of the use of cocaine and other drugs during pregnancy. Each day, D.C. teachers and administrators see young children whose health and developmental problems are so severe that they cannot easily use a crayon, identify primary colors, or orally relate simple stories. They start behind their more advantaged peers, and many of them do not experience success.

In the District, over 1,700 infants were born to teenage mothers last year. This number represents about 17 percent of all live births, or about one-third higher than the national teenage birth rate. These mothers frequently are themselves dropouts or they will drop out of the school system as a result of their pregnancy.

(4.) Basic Facts About the School System

(a.) Enrollment

The District public schools enroll about 88,000 students. Public school enrollment is presently about 91 percent Black, down from 95 percent in 1980, as the combined percentage of Asians, Native Americans, and Hispanics enrolled has increased from 2 percent to 5 percent. Whites constitute about 4 percent of the total enrollment. (See Figure I-2.)

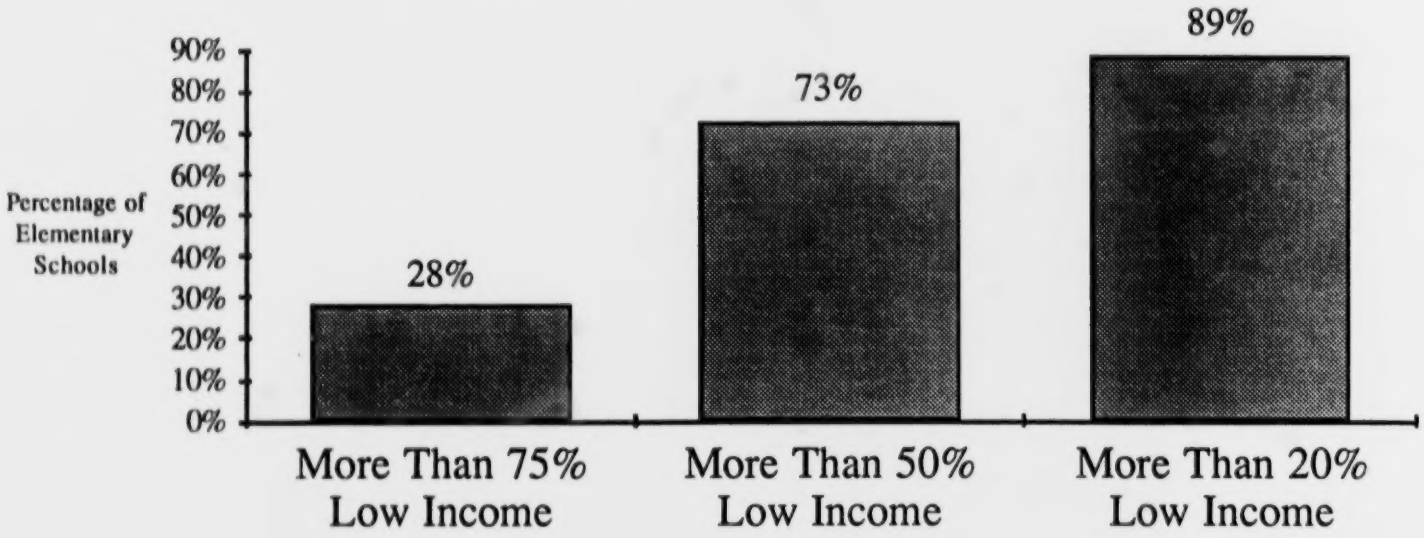
Public school enrollment has declined from a high of about 152,000 in 1968 to the current level of about 88,000 (see Figure I-3). The school system's projections are for a slight increase in enrollment over the next several years to over 89,000 by 1992 (see Figure I-4).

Private schools enroll about 15 percent of the District's youth.

(b.) What children know in the District of Columbia

Figures I-5 and I-6 show median student scores on the version of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) standardized testing program used by the District for the last two years. The median score for the total battery is slightly above the national

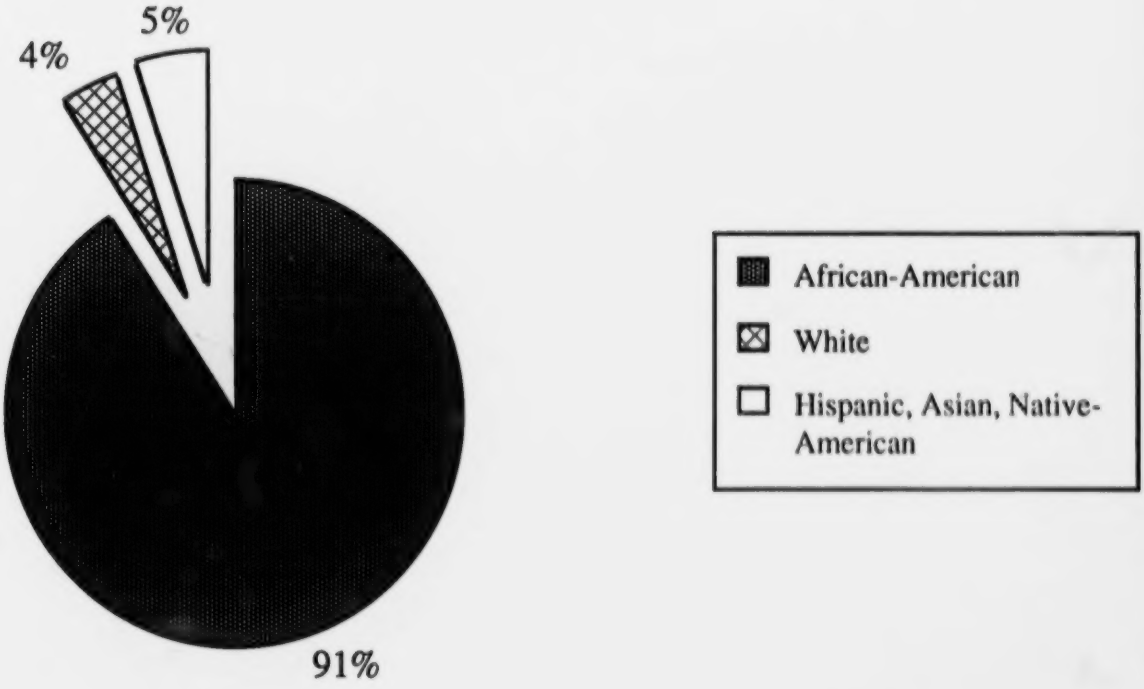
FIGURE I-1
LOW-INCOME CONCENTRATIONS
Distribution of Elementary Schools by
Percentage of Low-Income Student Population



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

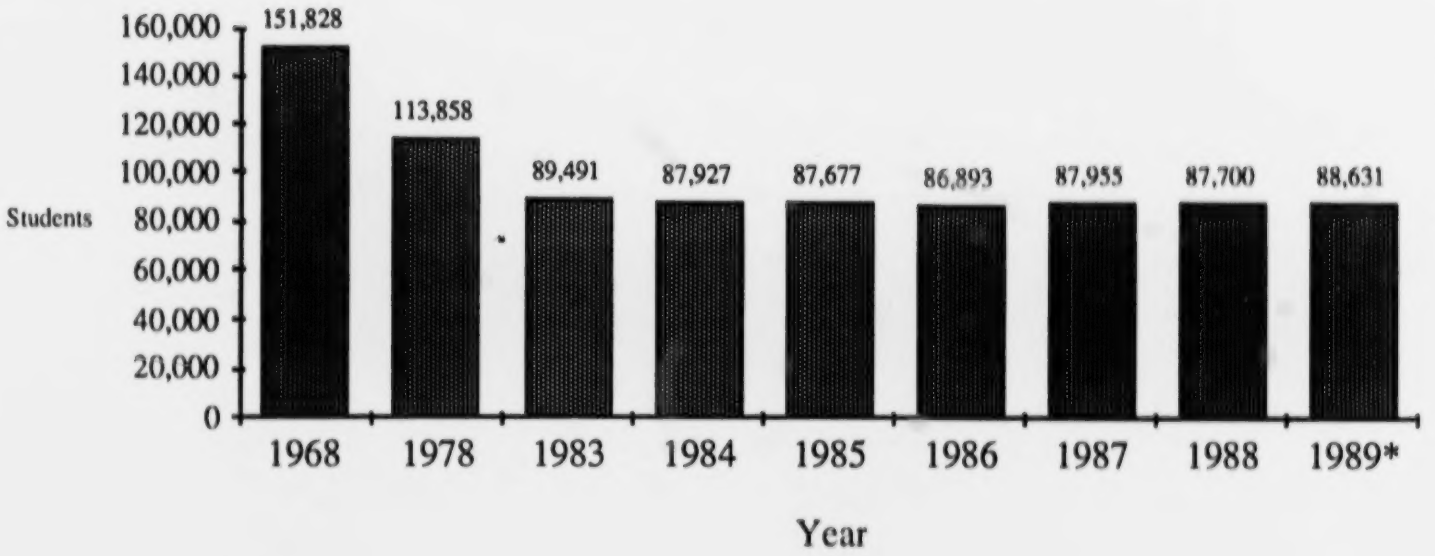
FIGURE I-2

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: 1988



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

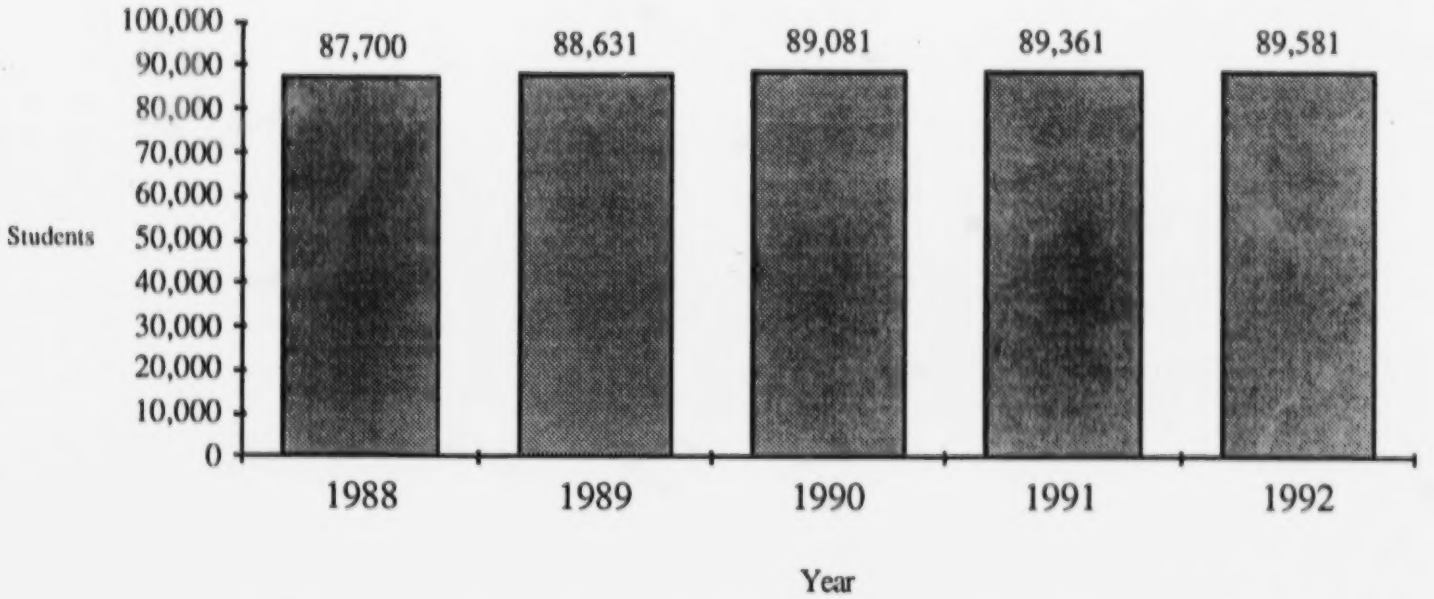
FIGURE I-3
ENROLLMENT
1968 to Present



* Projected.

Source: D.C. Public Schools.

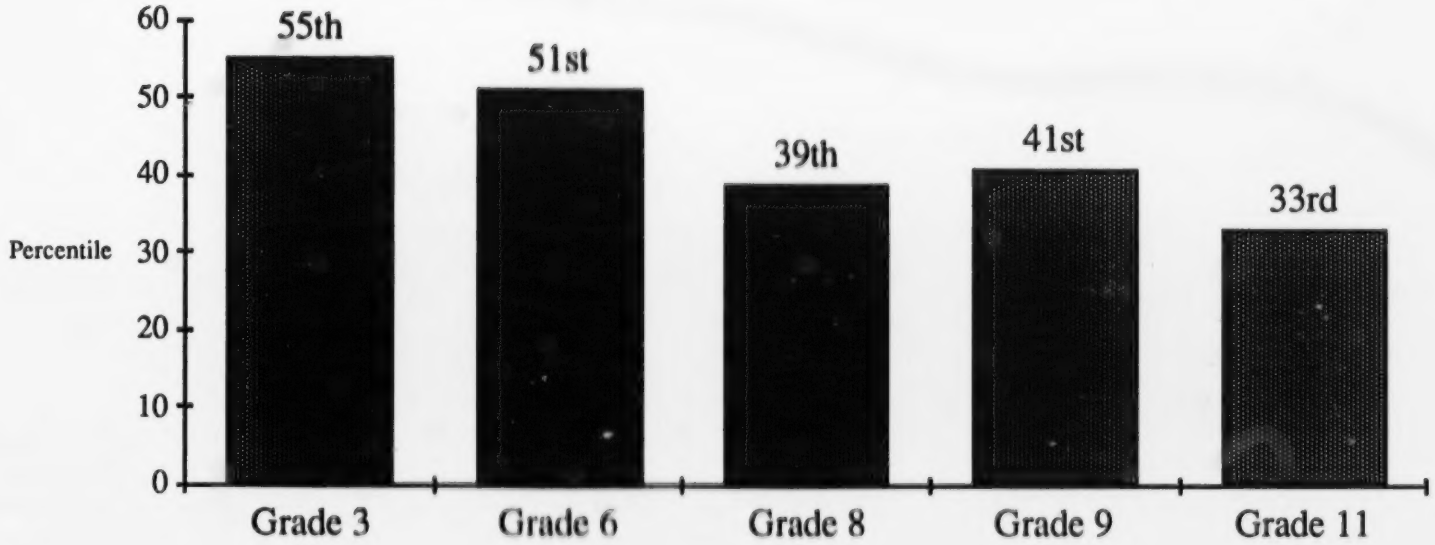
FIGURE I-4
ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS



Source: D.C. Public Schools, modified to account for 1988 actual experience.

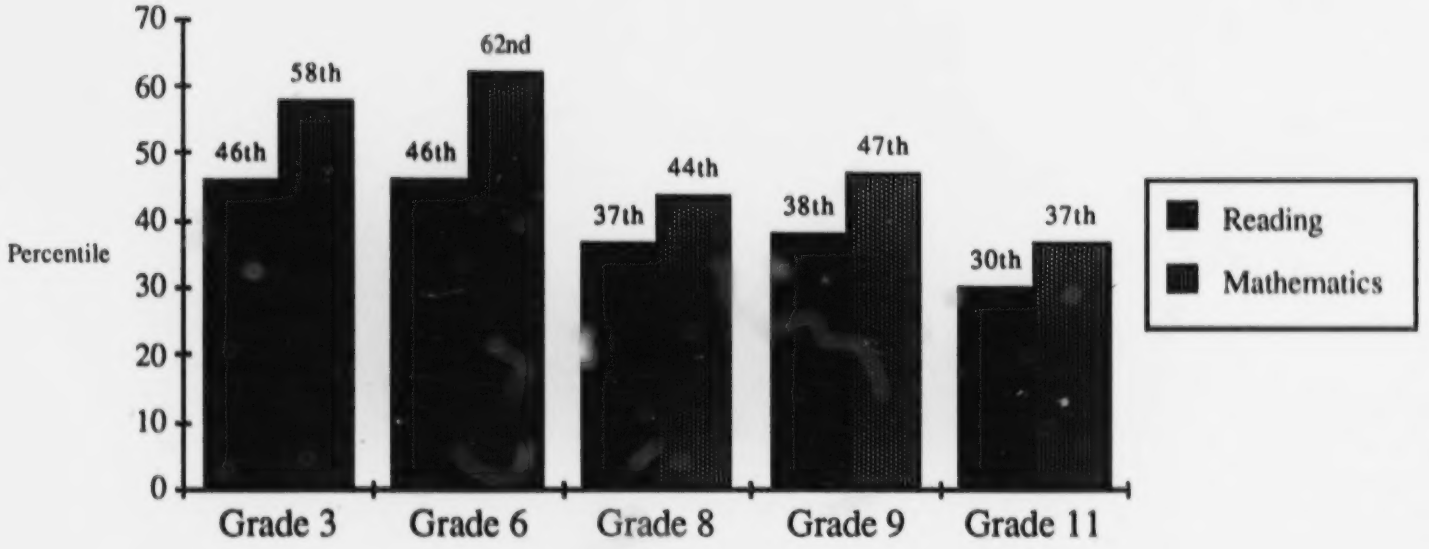
33

FIGURE I-5
MEDIAN SCORES IN 1987-1988 ON
COMPREHENSIVE TEST OF BASIC SKILLS
Total Battery



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

FIGURE I-6
MEDIAN SCORES IN 1987-1988 ON
COMPREHENSIVE TEST OF BASIC SKILLS
Reading and Mathematics



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

norms at the elementary level, but it falls off significantly, to the 39th percentile, in grade 8 and the 33rd percentile in grade 11. Median math scores at every grade level are substantially higher than reading scores.

The same trends are evident when one looks at the percentage of schools performing at or above national norms. As illustrated in Figures I-7 and I-8, among the District's elementary schools, approximately 70 percent achieve at or above national norms in mathematics but about 45 percent do so in reading. Among junior high schools, roughly 30 percent achieve at or above national norms in mathematics and 23 percent do so in reading.

Only one comprehensive senior high school achieves above national norms.

In recent years, standardized test scores have improved, but two years ago they declined when the school system switched to a version of the CTBS that was more recently normed. (Norms are often outdated so that many school districts claim to exceed the norm when in reality they no longer do.)

The College Board scores for 1987 of students in District public schools appear in Figure I-9. District scores have been rising slightly faster than national averages, but remain significantly below them.

(c.) How schools perform

The dropout rate in the District is estimated to be about 40 percent, which is significantly higher than the national average but similar to the experience of many large cities. This is an "estimate" derived primarily from the U.S. Department of Education and recently acknowledged by the Superintendent of Schools. The estimate is derived by comparing the number of ninth graders in a given year with the number of graduates three years later. However, the District generally does not track what happens to these students (a portion may attend school elsewhere); furthermore, many students drop out while they are in junior high school. (Many school systems across the country use different procedures for computing dropout data, the U.S. Department of Education is engaged in a project to standardize the collection of such data.)

Sixty percent of the dropouts are male, which means that half of the male students in the District do not finish high school.

Dropping out of school before graduation has a profound effect on future status. According to an internal school system study of those who drop out,

- 22 percent were enrolled in adult education programs but not working;
- 12 percent were enrolled in adult education and working;
- 13 percent worked full time;
- 9 percent worked part time; and
- 45 percent were unemployed and not in school.

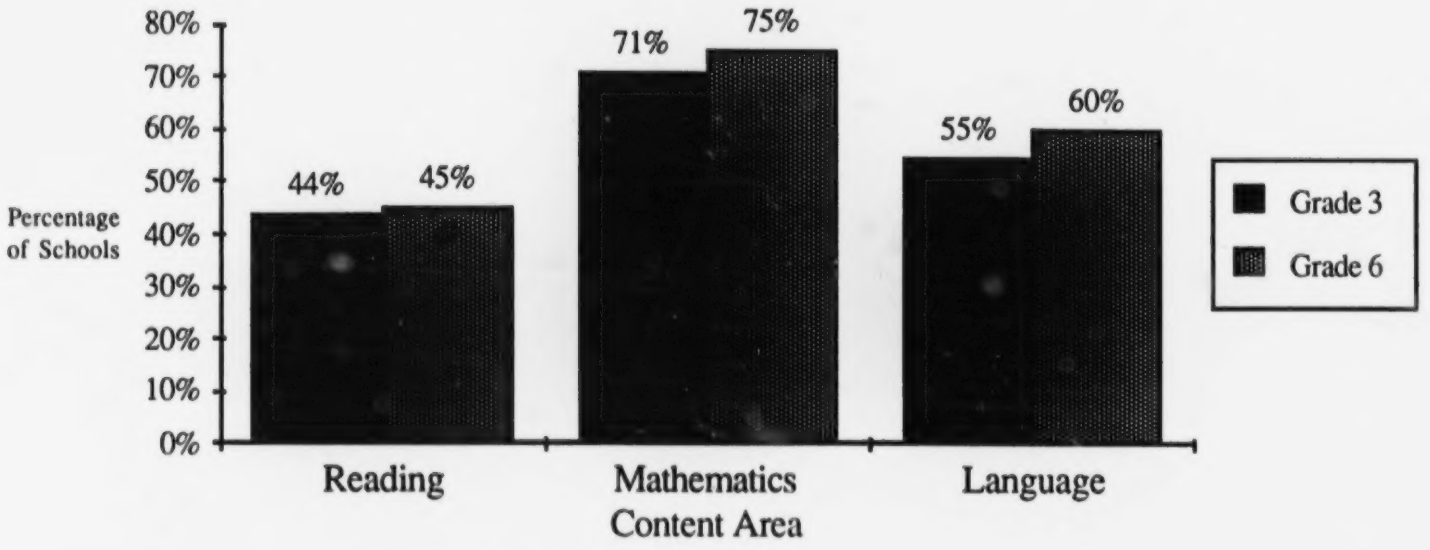
By contrast, of those who graduate from high school,

- 60 percent were in college;
- 14 percent were in technical or apprentice schools;
- 14 percent were employed;
- 3 percent were homemakers or in the military; and
- 7 percent were unemployed.

The District public schools conducted a study of its dropouts, which was published in October 1988. The study found that

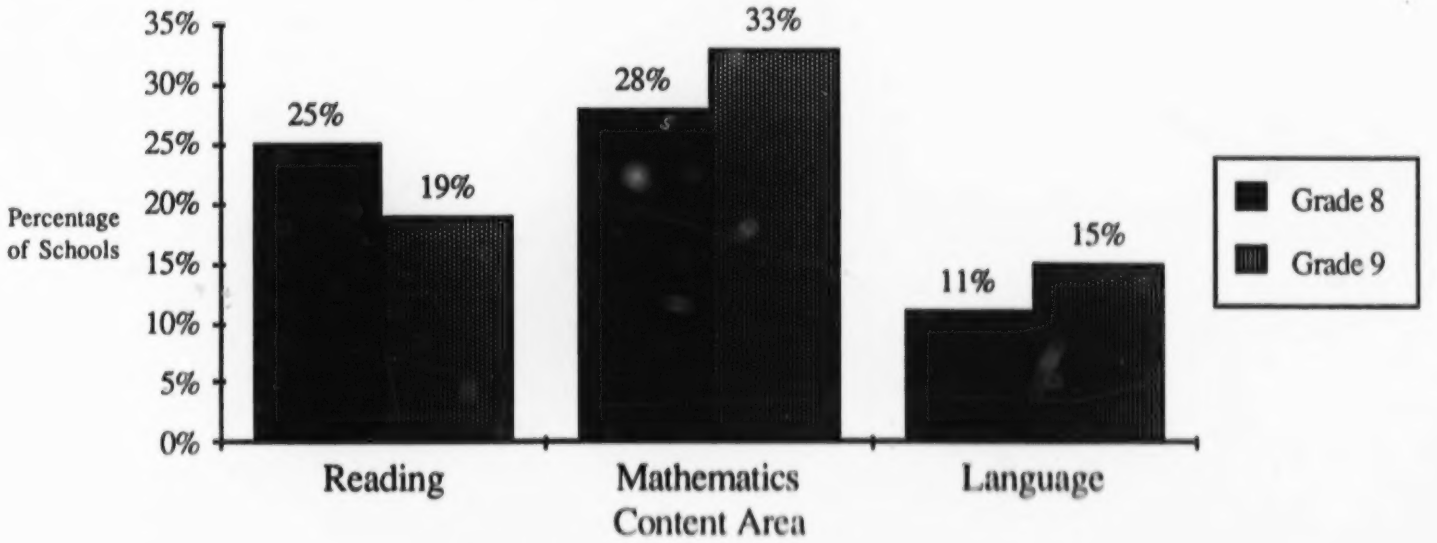
- Most dropouts leave school before reaching high school, and recurring patterns of school leaving are found in their families.
- Most dropouts leave school because of school failure and personal problems outside of school. Many also leave

FIGURE I-7
COMPARATIVE RESULTS FOR THE CTBS
Percentage of Schools Achieving
at or Above the National Norm



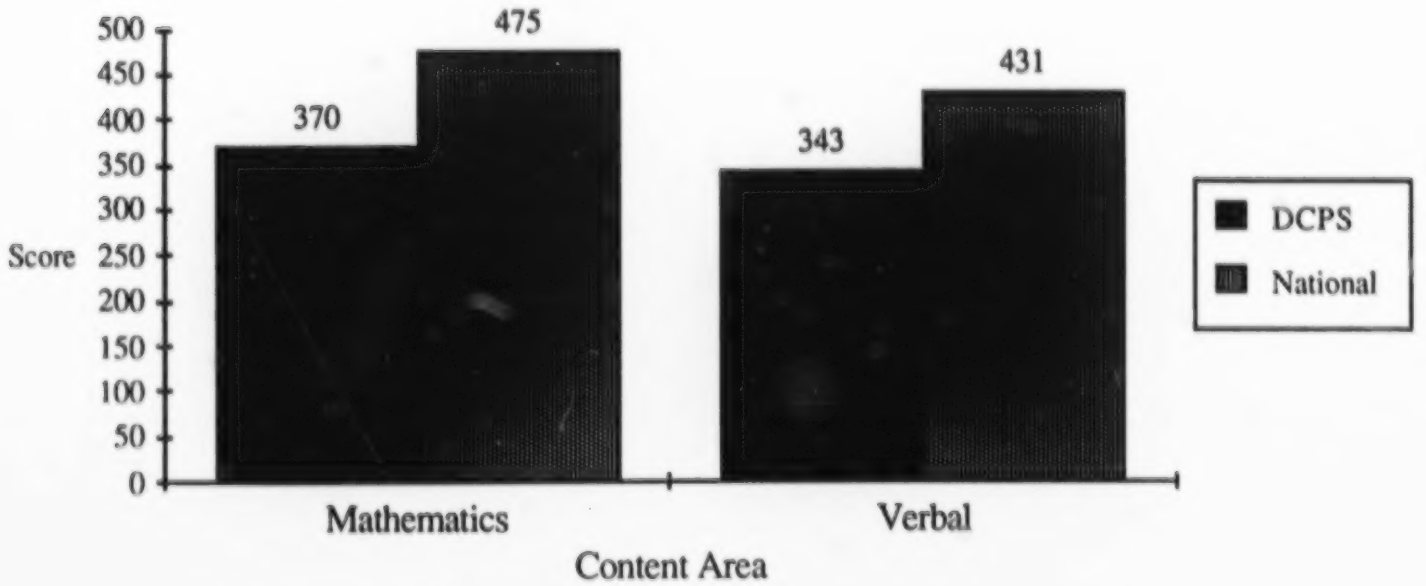
Source: D.C. Public Schools.

FIGURE I-8
COMPARATIVE RESULTS FOR THE CTBS
Percentage of Schools Achieving
at or Above the National Norm



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

FIGURE I-9
COLLEGE BOARD (SAT) SCORES
D.C. vs. NATIONAL AVERAGE (1987)



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

because of feelings of alienation caused by being transferred to alternative and adult education programs, as well as because of suspensions and expulsions.

- Most dropouts have been retained in grade, with more than one-half showing multiple retentions.
- Over half of dropouts felt dissatisfied with their teachers, and most of the dropouts said that unsatisfactory classroom instruction was the primary factor negatively affecting their school experience.
- More than half of all District dropouts reenroll in alternative and adult education programs at some time after leaving, but few actually complete these programs.
- District public school administrators working with dropouts before and after they leave fail to recognize major program inadequacies that affect the dropout problem; instead, they cite external factors as the primary problem.

In the Committee's judgment, the dropout problem is one of the paramount issues facing the school system. Despite an overall unemployment rate of 5 percent in the District, Black youth aged 18-24 have an unemployment rate of over 30 percent. Every day, jobs go unfilled in the District and the surrounding suburbs because employers cannot find enough young people with the requisite skills to fill available jobs.

Although in the past, young people who dropped out or did not do well in school had good jobs at good wages to drop into, today's dropouts and undereducated youth have little prospect of a bright economic future. Today's jobs, particularly in the Washington metropolitan area, demand the capacity to do knowledge work, to have the skills necessary to continue to learn in order to adjust to the rapid advances in technology and information and their applications. Anyone without a solid education, not only in the basics but in problem solving and thinking, will be left behind. The reality is that the District schools have not kept pace with this new world; unfortunately, therefore, many of the children are being left behind.

A corresponding problem is attendance. Official attendance figures are shown in Figure I-10. However, on the basis of conversations with administrators and teachers, the actual number of students in classrooms, particularly at the high school level, is much lower than those shown in the figure. The average attendance in any given class at the high school level is estimated to be between 70 percent and 75 percent, with a number of students not present more than half the time.

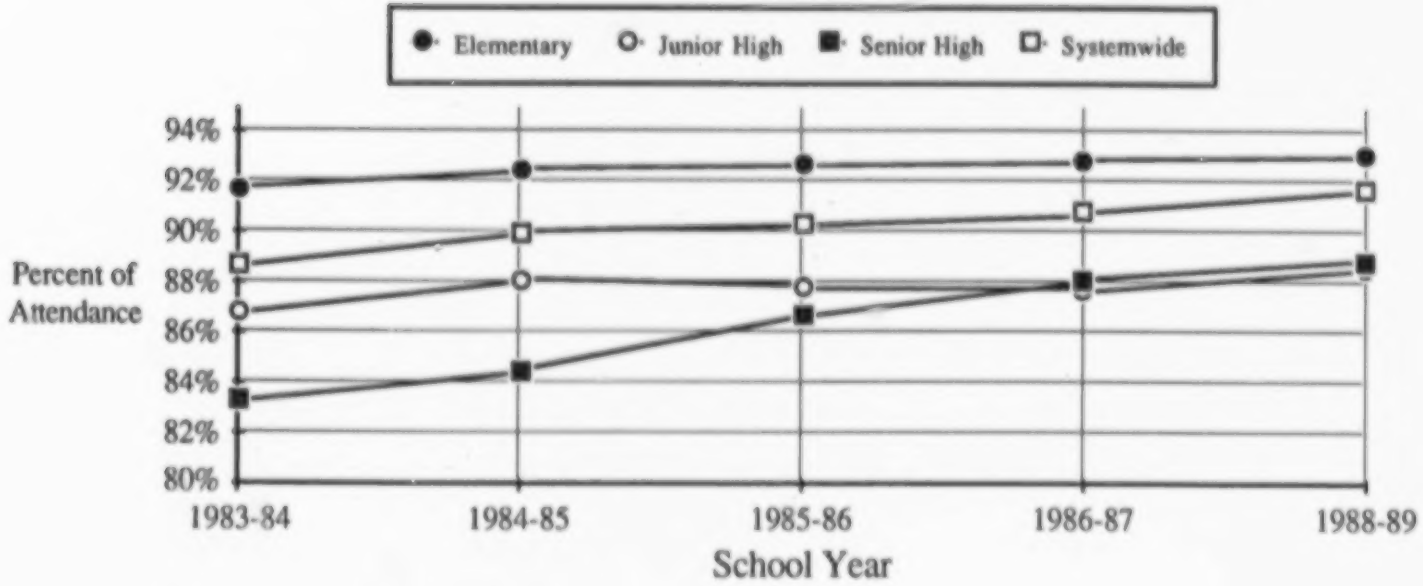
Concerning promotions, at the elementary school level, promotion requires demonstrated mastery of specific reading and mathematics skills at each level. Until this year, students were promoted even if they were deficient in one of these subjects. By the end of school year 1989-90, students will be required to be on grade level in both reading and mathematics.

In June 1987, 72 percent of students in grades 1-6 were promoted and were on grade level in both reading and math, 20.7 percent were promoted but were deficient in one of the two subjects, and 7.3 percent were retained. More students had deficiencies in reading than in mathematics.

Promotion in secondary schools is based on completion of the required number of course credits. In 1987-88 promotion percentages were as follows: grade 7, 74 percent; grade 8, 77 percent; grade 9, 81 percent; grade 10, 74 percent; and grade 11, 78 percent.

Statistics on grade point averages are currently published only at the high school level (comprehensive schools) and show the following:

FIGURE I-10
D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS RATES OF ATTENDANCE
By Level and Systemwide



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

- About 22 percent of all grades given in 1987 were Fs.
- The systemwide average in 1987 was 1.73, and only one school had an average over 2.0.
- Only about one-third of the 10th and 11th grade students have a C average (2.0) or better.

In summary, the problems facing the school system are severe. They are not unique to the District; other large cities have similar problems. But the outcomes of schooling — our children's performance — require major improvement.

The Washington metropolitan area cannot tolerate a dropout rate of 40 percent in its city core and the related long-term consequences of unemployment and crime. Too many children's lives are at stake. Clearly, all of us will be affected. Children will fail to realize their full potential; many will live unsatisfied lives. Citizens will find themselves having to spend more and more for law enforcement, criminal justice, and public assistance. Businesses, and the entire community, will suffer from the lack of a skilled workforce, and this area will grow less and less competitive with other areas of the country.

The improvements that the Committee calls for in this report will be cheaper by far than the price being paid for the consequences of school failure.

D. A Vision of the Future

The challenges facing the District public schools are immense. To meet these challenges, we need clearly articulated goals, a well-defined plan, broad community support, and a willingness to engage these issues over the long haul.

To begin, there is a need for clear, measurable goals.

The Committee has reviewed the goals adopted by the Board of Education and believes that they represent a comprehensive set of goals for individual students and the system as a whole. The Committee believes, however, that there should be a discrete set of systemwide goals that are:

- Specific, measurable, and expressed in five-year terms;
- More demanding than existing performance measures;
- Capable of being easily understood and monitored by the public; and
- Easily translated into a systemwide reporting mechanism to foster a sense of accountability on the part of individual schools.

Specifically, the D.C. Committee on Public Education believes that the District public schools should reexamine existing goals and set several specific, measurable goals.

Summary of the Recommendation

1. The D.C. Committee on Public Education believes that the D.C. public schools should, as part of a five-year plan, set several specific, measurable goals with respect to achievement, attainment, attendance, facilities, the workforce, and efficiency.

Based on discussions with the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and citizens in the community, the Committee recom-

mends that the Board consider adopting the following goals:

(a) By 1994, D.C. student academic performance at the elementary and secondary levels on the comprehensive tests of basic skills should reach at least at the 50th percentile in all subjects tested.

(b) By 1994, the graduation rate in the D.C. public schools should exceed 80 percent.

(c) By 1994, the attendance rates in grades 7 through 12 should exceed 92 percent.

(d) By 1994, the school system's buildings and grounds should be in good repair and a program should be in place to maintain and periodically upgrade them.

(e) By 1992, a system should be in place that supports the recruitment and retention of a high-quality workforce of teachers and principals and effectively deals with nonperforming employees.

(f) By 1994, the school system should be an efficient and cost-effective deliverer of services, and it should have reduced central operating costs by $8.5 million per year and central staff by 400 positions, including redeploying staff to schools.

Now, the report turns to the specific educational reforms that require attention if we, as a community, are to be successful.

Improvement must begin not just with specific goals, but with a plan for achieving them.

In the successful school systems visited, there was a coherence and strategy to education that worked. Instruction, curriculum, testing, and training were directed at achieving the goals set for the entire school system, for individual schools, and for individual students. There was a systemwide education plan; everyone knew and understood the plan and everyone understood their respective roles in the effort.

The D.C. Public School System has striven to achieve this coherence, and as noted previously and described further, there are many wonderful schools and effective teachers throughout the system. However, a comprehensive plan in which there is a design for achieving educational objectives does not, in the Committee's judgment, fully exist.

As the D.C. Committee on Public Education reviewed educational programs throughout the District, it observed several shortcomings.

First, although a significant amount of staff development and training occurs, in too many cases these efforts are not focused directly at the goals of the school system or the specific objectives of individual schools. Furthermore, there are separate central units for staff development, curriculum, and instruction. According to teachers and principals, the efforts of these separate units are not fully coordinated. Hence, the assistance that the D.C. Public School System is attempting to provide to its teachers and principals is neither consistent nor as well focused as it should be.

Second, the Committee found difficulties in the relationships between curriculum, instruction, and testing. Knowledgeable specialists told the Committee that in many instances teachers are not trained sufficiently to interpret the reasons that children may not understand a particular concept and therefore answer a test question incorrectly. Indeed, although the teacher knows the answer to the test question, he or she may not understand the concept and critical thinking process that is being examined. This is an acute problem with instruction, and only coordinated, high-quality efforts to improve instruction will remedy this difficulty.

Finally, the Committee was constantly told that the central office sends different messages to schools. By and large, there is a focus on particular programs and initiatives and not on and overall, coherent strategy. The result is that there are pressures on schools and teachers to alter their instruction in ways that often appear contradictory and simply do not make sense.

In Pittsburgh, PA; Norfolk, VA; Prince George's County, MD; Miami, FL; and a number of other areas visited, there was an overall education plan that worked. In Pittsburgh, there was a remarkable training program that ensured that all teachers in the system were provided meaningful, sustained assistance to achieve instructional objectives. In Norfolk, there were particular, systemwide strategies for dealing with the problems of low-achieving youngsters. In Prince George's County, there were systemwide goals understood by all principals and teachers throughout the system and intervention strategies targeted at those individuals requiring assistance.

The Committee recognizes that the District school system currently has many elements that are present in these successful systems. However, there is neither an overall plan understood by all involved, nor a comprehensive strategy for achieving the plan.

Summary of the Recommendation

2. In order to gain a greater sense of unity of purpose, the D.C. public schools should ensure that all aspects of the educational program—curriculum,

instruction, training, and testing—are carefully integrated, derive from the School Board's fundamental goals and overall vision for the school system, and are adequately communicated to all school system employees.

A. THE EARLY YEARS: A STRATEGY FOR REACHING THOSE IN NEED WITH HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS

(1.) Introduction

After extensive discussions with experts and practitioners throughout the country, the Committee is convinced that if the school system is to succeed in educating children in the District of Columbia, it must reach those in need early with high-quality, early childhood development programs. First, the quality of existing programs must be upgraded, recognizing that all children can learn, and then the reach of such programs must be extended to cover all at-risk three- and four-year-olds.

The Committee recognizes that the challenge for public schools, Head Start programs, and other day care providers is to help educate all children in the District for later participation in society. The effort must take into account the background of these children, their diverse cultural and learning styles, and the reality that a substantial percentage of the children live in poverty. Persistent poverty affects the growth and development of children in many ways. Many low-income children have few books and toys, live in overcrowded housing, receive inadequate medical care, and suffer from poor nutrition. Role models for economic achievement and social stability in the home and immediate community are also frequently absent from their lives .

Each year, about 40 percent of the 9,000 to 10,000 infants born in the District are born into poverty. Without help, many of these children will experience school failure, drop out, and not realize their full potential.

The national experience of the past two decades has taught us that it is hard to create effective programs to help people escape

from the cycle of school failure and poverty. One approach that has demonstrated positive and lasting results is the provision of good early childhood programs for children at risk of school failure. The Committee for Economic Development, an organization of the chief executive officers of major corporations, has recommended early childhood programs as "a superior educational investment for society."

In perhaps the most famous study of good early childhood education programs, High Scope Educational Research Foundation studied the effects of a good early childhood program operating from 1962 to 1967 at the Perry Elementary School in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Parents allowed 123 at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds to participate in the carefully controlled study.

The children who attended the early childhood program performed better intellectually and socially when they started school. Throughout school, they were more committed to education and had higher achievement test scores, and fewer were classified as mentally impaired. At age 19, higher percentages of people in the early childhood program group were literate, employed, and enrolled in postsecondary education; lower percentages were school dropouts, pregnant as teenagers, and on welfare. The results are summarized in Figure II-1.

Other research has found that although good early childhood care and education programs benefit all children to some extent, the benefits are greatest for at-risk children.

Only good early childhood programs, the research indicates, can produce long-term benefits. Such programs are characterized by:

- A child development curriculum in which children, rather than receiving formal academic instruction, initiate their own learning activities;
- Small groups and small numbers of children supervised by each adult; with 3- and 4-year-olds, for example, fewer than 20 children with 2 adults;
- A teaching staff that is trained in early childhood development;
- Early childhood in-service training for teachers and administrators;
- Parents who are fully involved as partners with teachers;
- The availability and coordination of comprehensive services to address the needs of at-risk children and parents; and
- Activities that promote the self-esteem of young children and help them to recognize their heritage and importance.

A good early childhood program can take place in any setting that meets these criteria—in public schools, Head Start programs, private nursery schools, child care centers, or child care homes.

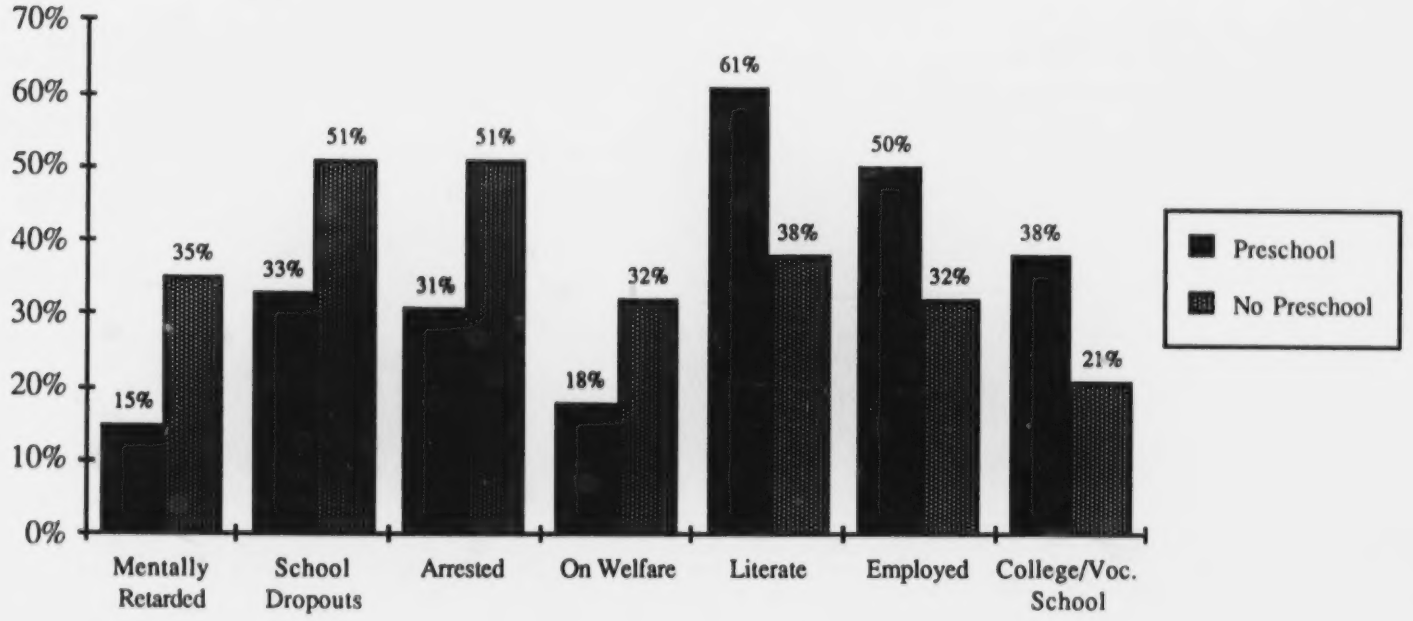
(2.) Programs in the District of Columbia

(a.) An impressive beginning

The D.C. Public School System has been a pioneer in early childhood education. It is one of the few school systems in the country to make available full-day, prekindergarten programs. At a time when many communities continue to question their ability to finance prekindergarten and kindergarten programs, the District has recognized the importance of reaching children early.

In 1987, the Board of Education identified the early childhood development program as one of its priority concerns for the next five years. In the fall of 1988, as a follow-up to the Board's action, the school system developed an Early Childhood Development Comprehensive Plan. The

FIGURE II-1
HIGH SCOPE PERRY PRESCHOOL STUDY FINDINGS



Source: High Scope Foundation.

plan includes goals, objectives, and standards based on a consensus of nationally recognized experts in the area of early childhood education. Hence, the school system has developed, but not yet fully endorsed, a comprehensive, quality plan to address the needs of young children in the District.

One of the top priorities of the Board of Education for the past several years has been to identify, at an early age, students with learning difficulties and to reach at-risk children early with effective programs.

(b.) Quality is the issue

The D.C. Public School System and the Board of Education recognize that the major issue facing early childhood programs in the District is the need to improve their quality. Indeed, this is a national issue and not one unique to the District. But it is important to understand the nature of these problems. The District has major needs in the areas of curriculum, group composition, parental involvement, in-service training, and comprehensive services.

The Committee observed that, despite the efforts to introduce a quality curriculum into early childhood programs, the typical practice is to extend downward the instructional program that exists in the early grades. Although this process is not unique to the District, it means that teachers tend to practice a skill-specific, formal instructional approach that is often inconsistent with the developmental needs of young children. Internal studies carried out by the school system have verified this problem.

An additional problem with respect to quality is the availability of personnel. An internal District school system study revealed that as many as one-fourth of prekindergarten classes in 1987-88 had over 20 children enrolled. Approximately 85 percent of the classes exceeded the recommended average of 10 children per adult because of the absence of a full-time aide or the presence of more than 20 children in the class. Hence, it would appear that the school system is not fully implementing the stated policy of the Board of Education that each prekindergarten class have a teacher, a full-time aide (included in 1990 budget request), and no more than 20 children.

The Committee understands fully what has caused this situation; the pressures of operating an elementary school make it difficult for principals and others to avoid compromises in prekindergarten staffing and enrollment limits. Nevertheless, research indicates that overcrowded or understaffed prekindergarten classes can harm children's development.

Another problem with early childhood programs is the availability of suitable equipment and materials. An internal evaluation by the public school system found that prekindergarten and Head Start classrooms had too many children in them for the available space and that 80 percent of the classrooms had less than 75 percent of the recommended materials and equipment. Teachers and principals identified these same problems.

Another problem is the salaries of teaching staff in certain Head Start programs in the city. Head Start combines early childhood education with parental involvement and health, nutrition, and social services. Through regional offices, the Federal Administration for Children, Youth, and Families administers Head Start. Head Start performance standards require two adults for a class of not more than 18 4-year-olds or 16 3- and 4-year-olds. Head Start teachers must have either a bachelor's degree in early childhood development, a child development associate credential, or two years of college with substantial coursework in early childhood development.

The National Child Day Care Association and the United Planning Organization Head Start, the Head Start grantees in addition to the school system, are in the position of offering starting teach-

er salaries that are below teacher salaries in the public school system. For this reason, these grantees have been short 8 to 10 teachers in the past 2 years and are no longer able to require teachers to have a bachelor's degree.

Another problem identified by the Committee is that early childhood programs are not integrated with the range of other services available for at-risk children. In general, school-based early childhood programs are limited to classroom programs. Additional services are either absent or are not coordinated with the school-based program. The Committee is convinced that only comprehensive, integrated services will make a difference for at-risk children. These services include health, nutrition, and psychological services, as well as parental support. In particular, many parents in the District, where economic and social problems can make the task of parenting difficult, have a critical need for help in solving some of their more acute problems. As demonstrated by Dr. James P. Comer, of Yale University, in the New Haven schools and elsewhere, the school can serve as the hub for family support activities. In general, the Committee found that such services are not coordinated in the District.

Finally, the Committee believes that there remain issues of quality with respect to other subsidized child care programs in the District. The Family Services Administration in the D.C. Department of Human Services, using District appropriated funds, subsidizes child care for approximately 6,500 children of all ages. Although this number has remained constant since fiscal year 1985, child care funding has increased by 31 percent, from $13.2 million to $17.3 million, thereby increasing per-child funding from $2,027 to $2,663.

Center caregivers must meet one of four sets of qualifications: (1) a bachelor's degree from an accredited college with a major in early childhood education or a related field but no child care center experience; (2) 2 years of college with 15 credit hours in early childhood development and a year of center experience; (3) a high school diploma, 9 credit-hours in early childhood, and 3 years of center experience; or (4) experience as a licensed child development center provided that he or she has been awarded a child development associate credential.

The Mayor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) is currently coordinating the revision of the District's central child care legislation that establishes the city's subsidized child care system. In addition, OECD is coordinating the rewriting of District Code of Regulations 29, Chapter 3, the District's licensing regulations for child development facilities. The Committee fully supports these efforts to enhance affordable, quality child care services for children and families in the District.

In summary, the Committee believes that major efforts are required to upgrade quality and that these efforts must precede any massive expansion of programs.

(c.) Gaps in services for at-risk children

The Committee's policy goal is to assist all three- to six-year-olds in the city, with a specific goal of targeting public funds to all at-risk three- and four-year-olds.

Early childhood education is provided by a number of different agencies in the District. Despite attempts to determine the age cohorts by income level currently served in publicly subsidized programs, the Committee was unable to do so. The Office of Early Childhood Development has plans to gather this information over the next several months.

By way of background, in 1965 the District public schools established pilot prekindergarten programs for at-risk four-year-olds using Federal funds. Since 1977, principals have used general education

funds for prekindergarten programs, and, beginning in 1982, the District has funded at least 1 prekindergarten program in each of the 120 elementary schools. In 1985, these programs, originally part-day, began to expand to full school-day operations. They are open on a first-come, first-served basis to all children who are four years old by December 31 of the school year. During the 1988-89 school year, the District will serve over 2,800 4-year-olds in 146 prekindergarten classes. These programs serve approximately one-third of the District's four-year-olds.

Since 1985, the District has committed itself to providing early childhood special education to all three- to five-year-olds needing services. During fiscal year 1988, the schools served approximately 400 children. Early childhood education has increased its collaboration with special education through mainstreaming of special education children and team teaching. The D.C. Department of Public Services through the Mayor's Office of Early Childhood Development has the lead responsibility for developing special education services for young children, from birth to age two, and for families.

Head Start reaches approximately 2,200 children at a cost of over $8 million annually; this group represents approximately one-third of 3- and 4-year-olds who live in poverty. Most children served under Head Start are served by the public school system; two agencies, the National Child Day Care Association and the United Planning Organization, are the other major Head Start grantees.

As noted earlier, the Family Services Administration subsidizes care for approximately 6,500 children of all ages.

On the basis of this fragmented information, the Committee estimates that approximately 5,700 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income families are now being served by one of these programs: Head Start serves 2,200 3- and 4-year-olds, virtually all from low-income families; the prekindergarten program offered by the school system serves approximately 2,800 4-year-olds, of whom perhaps 1,500 are from low-income families; and, of the 6,500 children from low-income families under the age of 6 served by subsidized child care, an estimated 2,000 are 3 and 4 year olds.

There are approximately 18,000 3- and 4-year-olds in the District, of whom approximately 6,800 are from low-income families (defined as eligibility for free meals in the school lunch program, or 130 percent of the Federal poverty income guidelines set according to family size). Hence, to meet the goal of reaching all 3- and 4-year-olds in need, programs must be expanded by approximately 17 percent to cover an additional 1,000 children.

The Committee believes that this expansion can be provided by a combination of the public schools, Head Start, and private providers. The Office of Early Childhood Development in the Office of the Mayor should oversee such expansion.

The Committee believes that program expansion should focus on the needs of at-risk children, not all three- and four-year-olds across the city.

(d.) Lower mandatory age for school attendance

The current age for compulsory school attendance in the District is seven on or before December 31st of the current school year. This compulsory age is higher than that in many other jurisdictions and conflicts with the broad objectives of the District to provide quality education programs for its young children. The Committee did not find evidence of substantial numbers of children age five and six not being enrolled because of the current mandatory attendance law. Over the past several years, enrollment in kindergarten, as a percentage of the succeeding year's first

grade enrollment, has ranged between 80 and 85 percent. The Committee believes that the mandatory attendance age should be lowered to conform to practice and broad objectives.

(3.) Discussion of the Recommendations

(a.) Improving the quality of programs

The Committee believes that the first priority is to take the steps necessary to improve the quality of existing early childhood programs in the District.

(a1.) A richer curriculum

The Committee recommends that the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools endorse the philosophy and curriculum articulated in the comprehensive plan submitted by the staff of the school system. This plan incorporates the views of recognized national professional organizations, including the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Black Child Development Institute.

There is no need to duplicate the richness of this proposed curriculum in the Committee's report. The plan says that the program should promote the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and cultural development of young children and respond to the needs of their families. The plan notes that play is an indispensable facilitator of young children's development and that young children learn best through active and creative use of space and materials. Teachers are to prepare the environment for children to learn through exploration and interactions with adults, other children, and materials. Children plan parts of their day with the teacher, selecting activities in learning centers around the classroom, such as creative art, science, mathematics, language arts, blocks, dramatic play, sand and water play, music, and library.

Early childhood programs also offer an opportunity to begin overcoming the low self-esteem that plagues at-risk children. Programs should have as one of their primary goals developing pride and expectations for success. In the District, emphasis on African-Americans would reflect the heritage of the dominant group in the schools and help to reinforce positive self-images for African-American children. Increasing children's awareness of other cultures (e.g., Hispanic-American and Asian-American) should also be emphasized.

This recommendation does not, of course, mean that the schools should simply give young children history lessons. Rather, children need opportunities to see the important adults in their lives taking pride in their group's accomplishments and having hope for the future. Young children need opportunities to see themselves as achievers rather than as failures.

(a2.) More teachers and aides

The Committee supports the position of the Board of Education that each prekindergarten class should have a teacher, a designated full-time aide, and no more than 20 children. The Committee estimates that an additional 40 to 80 aides need to be hired to address the current staffing shortfall. (This item was requested by the Board of Education as part of its budget proposal for fiscal year 1990.)

The Committee also believes that teachers with the requisite qualifications should receive the same starting salary, whether they work for the school system or for a nonschool system Head Start grantee. Those who do not meet the teacher qualifications should be paid as aides.

(a3.) Providing comprehensive services

The Committee recommends that the school become the focus for the provision of

comprehensive health, psychological, and nutrition services for children and families. It also recommends that teams of nurses, psychologists, and social workers be assigned by the Department of Health and Human Services to work directly with clusters of schools and the early childhood professionals within these schools. These teams should be targeted to those areas of the city where the needs are greatest.

In addition, the Committee recommends that all children, upon entering school, receive a comprehensive set of health, psychological, and educational assessments to identify any special needs and to enable the school system and the District government to address them.

(a4.) Increasing training for teachers and administrators

To facilitate the provision of comprehensive services and the enriched curriculum, the Committee recognizes the need for a substantial training effort for existing teachers and administrators within the public school system, as well as within the Head Start and private care providers. The Committee believes that training should be coordinated between the D.C. Public School System and the Mayor's Office of Early Childhood Development. The training may be supported by local universities.

(a5.) Setting higher standards

The Department of Health and Human Services plans to propose legislation that would rationalize subsidies for private day care providers and to issue regulations that will upgrade standards for the provision of day care within the city. The Committee fully supports these efforts and urges their adoption.

(b.) Extension of Services

(b1.) Reaching all at-risk three- and four-year-olds

As program quality is improved, the Committee recommends the expansion of services to provide coverage to all at-risk three- and four-year-olds in the city. Expansion should be targeted at low-income areas of the city.

(b2.) Providing before- and after-school care

The Committee supports making available before and after school child care for all Head Start, prekindergarten, and kindergarten children who need it. Programs for low-income children should be subsidized; more affluent families should be charged the cost of the child care services.

(c.) Mandatory attendance law

The Committee recommends lowering the compulsory attendance age to five; this is consistent with a bill introduced by D.C. City Councilmembers John Ray and Hilda M. Mason.

Summary of the Recommendation

3. The District of Columbia should provide quality early childhood programs for all at-risk three- to six-year-olds by:

(a) Upgrading the quality of early childhood programs through reforms pertaining to curriculum, the availability of staff, and the provision and coordination of comprehensive services, training, and the setting of higher standards.

(b) Extending programs to reach all low-income three- and four-year-olds currently not being served, including the provision of before- and after-school programs.

(c) Lowering the compulsory attendance age to five years of age.

(d) Requiring that all children receive a comprehensive set of health, psychological, and educational assessments to enable the school system to better meet the needs of each child.

B. THE CURRICULUM: A REVITALIZATION

(1.) Introduction

Here the Committee describes what it found concerning the curriculum in the District public schools and the changes that it recommends. The Committee notes, however, that although changes need to be made in curriculum, nearly every person in the District with whom it spoke and virtually all of the research on the subject suggest that instruction, rather than curriculum, is the most urgent priority. The issue of instruction and suggestions for its improvement are discussed under the teaching profession.

(2.) The Curriculum in the D.C. Public School System

School systems are rich and diverse because they consist of individual schools, each with its own teachers and instructional programs; the District is no exception. As a result, it is difficult to generalize about the curriculum, but the Committee does so here in attempting to describe the typical school in the District of Columbia.

(a.) Elementary schools

At the elementary level, the enrollment in a typical school is about 400 students, in prekindergarten through grade 6. School starts for students at 9:00 A.M. and ends at 3:00 P.M., with an hour out for lunch and recess, supervised by teachers. The school has 1 full-day prekindergarten class of 19 4-year-olds, with a teacher and a half-time aide; 2 full-day kindergarten classes of 21 students each with 1 teacher and no full-time aide; 15 classes in grades 1 through 6, whose sizes range from 19 to 27 students; and 1 self-contained special education class with a small group of pupils, a teacher, and 1 aide.

The school's basic instructional program follows the District's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), which specifies skills to be covered in each subject area. Under the Student Progress Plan (SPP) teachers track and report on each child's mastery of a list of "critical objectives," particularly in reading and mathematics; mastery of these objectives are required for promotion to the next grade. CBC has been in place for about 10 years, and SPP for 7 or 8 years.

Because of recent modifications to SPP, the school has been instructed by the central office to undertake certain steps intended to improve classroom instruction, such as a needs assessment survey; local plan components describing teacher support in reading and mathematics instruction; setting benchmarks for staff development activities, student achievement monitoring forms and individual assistance plans; and use of various computerized systems.

In the typical school, each class as a whole remains with the same teacher all day, except for time with the school librarian in the media center and one period a week of music or art and one of physical education taught by roving teachers. About half of the children in the class leave it one to five times a week for small group instruction by the roving reading or mathematics teacher, by the resource teacher, or by the Chapter I (Federal compensatory education program) teacher or aide, often in the Chapter I lab. A few children in each class who are identified as gifted and talented also are pulled out of class for special instruction.

In many elementary schools, there is no effective science program, nor is algebra introduced. As in elementary schools across the country, the teacher has not been trained to teach science. The teacher may have difficulty teaching to the level of the science cur-

riculum and preparing students to take tests.

The school media center (library) is the center for books, magazines and whatever audiovisual equipment the school has. (Table II-1, provides a composite of a typical District elementary school for the 1988-89 school year, including available equipment.) The librarian selects and maintains the collection, teaches children's literature and research skills, and advises teachers on materials, which he or she obtains from the media center of the D.C. Public School System, public libraries, and community sources. He or she also provides many of the materials and information for special programs and events.

In addition to the requirements of the CBC and SPP, remedial programs, subject area instruction, and gifted and talented instruction, the school is also directed, under the Writing Initiative (WIN) to focus on writing, with journals provided by the system and one staff member appointed as the writing coordinator. When the Writing-to-Read computer laboratory is installed, that program will be added to the school's program for younger children. Individual teachers and students participate in some of the special training programs and activities that the system offers, such as Mathematics and Science for Minorities, a choral festival, and the speech and drama competition. There are also schoolwide special events such as assemblies connected with holidays or Black History Month, the science fair, and visits from guest speakers.

Most of these activities, particularly the required ones, are the results of systemwide initiatives to deal with identified problems and educational issues (e.g., ending social promotions, developing writing skills, providing drug awareness activities, and improving attendance or to incorporate programs that have worked well on a pilot basis.

Internal evaluations indicate that some teachers complain of too many competing instructional demands and a lack of integration among programs.

(b.) Junior high schools

The average junior high school enrolls 600 students in grades 7 through 9. Students attend school from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, with 6 class periods of 45 minutes each, a homeroom, and a 45-minute lunch period; this schedule varies when the periods are scaled back because of assemblies, field trips, picture taking for school identification cards, drug awareness activities, or any of a number of other special programs, activities, or exigencies. Five periods a day are devoted to English, mathematics, social studies, science, and a choice among French, Spanish, and a limited number of business, home economics, or shop courses. A sixth period is divided between physical education and art or music. Academic classes range in size from 11 to 34 and average about 21. Enrollment also includes a small group of special education students in a self-contained class. Table II-2 shows a composite of a typical District junior high school.

Junior high school courses are based on the same kind of CBC that elementary classes use. Under the Secondary Student Progress Plan (SSPP) which has been in effect for two or three years, at the end of the year, students are given a systemwide criterion-referenced test of critical skills and objectives in each course. To pass a course, a student must demonstrate mastery of these skills, which is based on passing the systemwide test. The teacher determines the letter grade. To be promoted to the next grade a student must pass courses in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Under the Secondary School Improvement Program, the school is implementing the second year of its own improvement plan in instruction, academic

Table II-1.
Composite of Typical D.C. Elementary School, 1988-1989

Enrollment: About 400

Staff:

1 Principal
1 School secretary

1 Prekindergarten teacher — Class size: 19
0.5 Prekindergarten aide

2 Kindergarten teachers — Class size: 21

15 Teachers, grades 1-6 — Class size average: 22.6
Range: 19-27

1 Educational aide*
1 General resource teacher
1.6 Reading/science/mathematics specialist teachers (= 8 days/week)
1 Physical education teacher (= 1 period/week per child)
1 Art or music teacher (= 1 period/week per child)

1 Special education teacher with self-contained class
1 Special education teacher for regular pupils
1 Special education aide

1 Librarian
1 Counselor

Nurse who visits once a week

Library books:
4,700 (=11.7 per pupil); compare standards (minimum 10, adequate 15 innovative 20)

School equipment:
Copier: 1 (for office, library, counselor, and 24 6 teachers)

Audiovisual equipment:

	Working	Not working	D.C. Public Schools	MSDE** recommended standards
16-mm projector	3	2	3-4	6
Overhead projector	5	1	20	20
VCR	0	0	-	3
Video camera	0	0	-	1
Televisions	4	2	3	20

* Plus three Chapter 1 aides and a Chapter 1 teacher if school is Chapter 1-designated.
** Maryland State Department of Education.

Sources: Parents United, Student Leader and Principal Survey Report, updated by Parents United analysis of Actual Pupil/Teacher Monitoring Reports, November 1988; D.C. Public Schools position allocations paper; and figures derived from D.C. Public Library/Media Services Annual Report Summary.

Table II-2.
Composite of Typical D.C. Junior High School, 1988-1989

Enrollment: About 600

Staff:

1 Principal
2 Assistant principals
2 School secretary/clerks
1 Attendance aide

28 Teachers of English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language — Class size average: 21.2; Range: 16 - 28

5 Teachers of art, music, and physical education
4 Teachers of business and vocational/technical education
1 Transition teacher
1 Remedial computer laboratory teacher

4 Educational aides, including 1 composition and 1 mathematics/science

1.5 Special education teacher with self-contained class
1.5 Special education teacher for regular pupils

1 Librarian
1 Library aide
1 Counselors
1 Guidance clerk

1 Security aide

Nurse present 3 days/week

Library books:
7,550 (= 12.6 per pupil); compare standards (minimum 10, adequate 15, innovative 20)

School equipment:
Copiers: 2 working, 1 out of order (for office, library, counselors, and 42.6 teachers)

Audiovisual equipment:

	Working	Not working	D.C. Public Schools	MSDE* recommended standards
16-mm projector	3	1	5 - 8	10
Overhead projector	8	2	19 - 37	38
VCR	2	0	-	6
Video camera	1	0	-	2
Televisions	3	0	6	39

* Maryland State Department of Education.

Sources: Parents United, Student Leader and Principal Survey Report, updated by Parents United analysis of Actual Pupil/Teacher Monitoring Reports, November 1988; D.C. Public Schools position allocations paper; and figures derived from D.C. Public Library/Media Services Annual Report Summary.

achievement, curriculum, facilities, and staff development. In addition, because of recent modifications to SSPP, the school has been instructed to take the steps described for the elementary school (under SPP modifications), and to provide assistance to teachers on learning styles, planning, teacher techniques, and grouping. The school also has appointed one staff member as the writing coordinator and has distributed journals for writing to all students under the Writing Initiative (WIN). Special educational activities include the science and history fairs, the spelling bee, It's Academic, Odyssey of the Mind, citywide drama and mathematics competitions, and performances by the school's chorus and its two bands in citywide judged competitions.

The library, officially known as the media center, is run by a librarian and an aide. They select and maintain the collection of about 7,500 books plus periodicals and other materials, check out the school's small stock of audiovisual equipment, and obtain materials from sources outside the building. The librarian also assists teachers and students in getting information and tries to help integrate new technology into the school's instructional program.

(c.) Senior high schools

A composite of the staff and equipment of a typical senior high school appears in Table II-3. The senior high school (generally referred to as high school throughout the text) overlaps the junior high school by enrolling students in 9th through 12th grade but the 9th grade consists of students chosen for a special program, and is quite small. As in the junior high, the required school day for students runs from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. and has 6 class periods of 45 minutes each plus a homeroom. Classes are sometimes shortened for assemblies or other special activities on subjects such as drugs, teenage pregnancy, attendance, awards, recognition of students, and the like. The school is in use for a much longer period than the regular 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. instructional day, with several courses and student activities offered at 8:00 A.M., athletics after school or in the evening, and some community activities and meetings.

The school is organized, traditionally, into departments—English, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign languages, art, music, physical education and health, business, industrial arts, home economics, military science, drivers education, and special education—each with 2 to 12 faculty members. Students have a much broader choice among course offerings than they do in the junior high and fewer specifically required courses, although they have more graduation requirements than students have in many states. During grades 9 through 12, students must complete 4 years of English, 2 years of mathematics, 2 years of science (one of a laboratory science), 1 year of foreign language, 1 year of U.S. history, 1 semester of D.C. history, 1 semester of U.S. government, and 1.5 years of physical education and health (combined). Students who fail the Life Skills test (a systemwide test of basic practical competencies, such as the ability to interpret a map or fill out an employment application) must take the Life Skills course. All other courses are elective, and qualified students also have the option of enrolling in the school's specialized public/private partnership program, which has its own curriculum or of sharing time at career center schools at different sites.

To graduate from high school, students must complete a total of 20.5 Carnegie units, the standard measure of academic credit for secondary education. Two semesters of study in a particular subject equal one Carnegie unit. To graduate from the Banneker Academic High School, students must earn 26 Carnegie units. Its additional graduation requirements include enrollment and regular attendance for eight con-

Table II-3.
Composite of Typical D.C. Senior High School, 1988-1989

Enrollment: About 1,300

Staff:

1 Principal
3 Assistant principals
3 School secretary/clerks
1 Attendance aide

61 Teachers of English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language — Class size average: 21.2; Range: 16 - 30

9 Teachers of art, mustic, and physical education
11 Teachers of business and vocational/technical education
1 Life skills teacher
1 Remedial computer laboratory teacher

5 Educational aides, including 2 composition and 1 mathematics/science

2 Special education teacher with self-contained class
2 Special education teacher for regular pupils
1 Special education aide

2 Librarians
1 Library aide
4 Counselors
1 Guidance clerk

2 Security aides

1 Nurse present full time

Library books:
10,000 (= 7.6 per pupil); compare standards (minimum 10, adequate 15, innovative 20)

School equipment:
Copiers: 2 working (for office, library, counselors, and 86 teachers)

Audiovisual equipment:

	Working	Not working	D.C. Public Schools	MSDE* recommended standards
16-mm projector	4	3	8 - 17	13
Overhead projector	9	4	33 - 67	69
VCR	2	0	1	12
Video camera	1	0	1	2
Televisions	2	0	13	68

* Maryland State Department of Education.

Sources: Parents United, Student Leader and Principal Survey Report, updated by Parents United analysis of Actual Pupil/Teacher Monitoring Reports, November 1988; D.C. Public Schools position allocations paper; and figures derived from D.C. Public Library/Media Services Annual Report Summary.

secutive months prior to graduation and a passing score on the Life Skills examination or course (for those who fail the examination twice).

Most classes in the core academic departments—English, math, science, social studies, and foreign languages—have an enrollment of 16 to 30, but there are a handful of courses with only a few students. These courses are the school's two AP courses (English, calculus, or U.S. history), one third-year and fourth-year foreign language sequence, and several other specialized courses in subjects and sequences that high schools are expected to offer. These are offset by a few social studies and first year language classes of 32 to 36 students. Average academic class size is about 21. Business and shop classes are usually smaller.

Students are placed in English classes—college preparatory or regular—on the basis of a counselor's recommendation. In subjects such as mathematics or a foreign language, where courses proceed in sequence, placement is controlled by the level of courses already completed and passed. Students who have serious deficiencies in reading are supposed to be placed in small remedial reading and mathematics classes or a laboratory for computer-assisted remedial instruction, but teacher time is not always available and the courses are elective, so students with deficiencies do not always take them. Placement in other courses depends on the students' choices, schedule conflicts, and the availability of space in the classes elected.

CBC has been available for some time, but only in the last year has the SSPP—with systemwide criterion-referenced tests and requirements to master critical objectives—been extended through the grade 12. Several years ago, however, after assessment by a team from the Secondary School Improvement Program, the school established a school improvement team and wrote an action plan for improving attendance, student achievement, school climate, instruction, parent and community involvement, and SSPP.

A follow-up evaluation in 1987 found that the team was working effectively and that the teachers, students, and parents surveyed had a positive view of the current educational processes in the school (so that the positive climate needed to improve instructional practices and outcomes was being established). However, the evaluation also noted some "pervasive" concerns. Principals have complained about a lack of coordination among central and regional offices in requests for information and about "being canvassed to death." Teachers expressed concern about the burden of paperwork associated with SSPP, perceived inappropriateness of its recordkeeping requirements, the mandate of new programs without strategies for integrating them into existing programs, and underdevelopment of the school's data management abilities.

Finally, attendance remains a major problem. No official data are compiled on attendance in individual classes, but teachers and principals acknowledge that it is unacceptably low.

(3.) The Committee's Analysis of Curriculum (and Instruction)

(a.) Core Curriculum and Instruction

For more than a decade, the core curriculum of the D.C. public schools has been contained within the framework called CBC. Although CBC never reached to all subjects and levels, it nevertheless has filled a void for most teachers, giving them a structure for teaching that is keyed to the assessment program.

CBC was a state-of-the-art system when

it was developed. At that time, there was a widespread belief that children would learn more if learning tasks were broken up into small steps and if students were assessed frequently on their mastery of the ordered sequence of steps. CBC was also based on the belief that more learning occurred when teachers engaged in direct, whole-class instruction. Thus, the curriculum guides of the District contain hundreds of small objectives and teaching suggestions. Over the life of the CBC project, the school system has attempted to make these cumbersome lists of objectives and teaching suggestions more manageable by providing teachers with abbreviated checklists of items on which students would be tested.

Over the past 15 years, though, both research and experience have challenged many of the underlying assumptions of CBC. For example, there is now very powerful evidence that children lose the threads of connection between steps in a learning process if the process is broken up into too many small, easily measured objectives. Evidence also exists that teacher-controlled, whole-class instruction—although it is appropriate to some learning tasks—does not help children to learn to read for understanding or to think critically. The widely advertised gains in achievement scores on rudimentary basic skill tests vanish when children move to junior high school, largely reflecting, the Committee believes, the reality that effective learning is not occurring.

There is compelling evidence that children must simultaneously, and from the beginning of the process, learn both low-order and high-order tasks. For example, they must learn basic mathematics facts and basic word attack skills, but at the same time, they must be asked to solve practical mathematics problems, read worthwhile literature, and try their hands at writing. There is strong evidence from research, across the curriculum, that "less is more." When students have the opportunity to learn fewer things in depth and the time to understand fewer things well, they like school better and learn more. There is also compelling evidence that children must be actively engaged in school learning, rather than passively listening to teachers and answering questions.

At-risk children, like all other children, need to see the point of what they are doing. The task, then, is to figure out how to get children actively engaged in schoolwork.

The low levels of achievement of District students on basic skills, as well as their declining levels of achievement as they progress through school, suggest that CBC should be modified so that the best that is currently known about curriculum, instruction, and assessment can once again form the basis of the educational programs of the D.C. public schools.

Interviews with numerous curriculum officials and teachers suggest not only that standardized tests emphasize low-level knowledge but also that many teachers pitch their instruction below the level of standardized tests. For example, many children will fail reading test items that require inferences, but their teachers continue to stress literal rather than inferred, meanings. Similarly, many children will fail items on mathematics tests because they—and evidently their teachers—believe that all test items must be solved by rote application of computational skills. However, many test items expect children to think about what they are doing or to estimate an answer rather than to plug numbers into formulas.

In the District, is there something about the nature of the current curriculum guides, checklists, and testing programs that encourages teachers to teach to lower levels of understanding? Or, is there something that discourages them from expecting the children to think about what they are learning?

A related problem is instruction. In

most of the classrooms visited, teachers were lecturing students, asking them questions, and drilling them on low-level objectives related to the CBC or upcoming tests. Students rarely asked their own questions. Rarely did the members of the Committee see students working with one another in small groups to construct and solve problems. Mostly, District teachers, as do most teachers across the country, teach by "telling," and students are expected to be passive and quiet until the teachers ask them to define a word or supply a fact. Generally, the students are passive and quiet, but it is clear that many of them are not very interested in the work, and some are not learning very much.

In our society, children can no longer be expected to plod along passively, learning isolated facts, and not seeing the point of what they are learning or its relevance to their futures as workers or students. Those children who have little exposure to ideas and contacts outside their immediate neighborhoods, need opportunities to talk with others and form their own questions, to work with others to solve problems, to teach others (long known to be one of the best ways of learning), and to apply what they know to problems worth solving.

Good teachers do these things, and even many ordinary teachers know they should do these things, but they are often afraid of losing control of their classes. Few current teachers were trained to use teaching methods that require students to take more responsibility for their own learning or to think independently.

(b.) Elementary schools

Elementary mathematics. Many teachers were taught mathematics in a rote fashion, and as a result, they do not understand conceptual mathematics. Thus, in their teaching, they have difficulty taking children beyond simple, repetitive computation exercises.

Few teachers have been taught to interpret test results and to adjust their teaching accordingly.

Most standard, commercial textbooks rush children through basic computation without allowing them time to understand the meaning of what they are doing and repeat the same process from grade to grade. Only a few textbooks promote thinking about mathematics, make it more concrete and practical and give children problems worth solving. Thus, the textbook selection practices in the District reinforce the limitations of the CBC mathematics curriculum.

Elementary reading and writing. Contemporary research about reading instruction calls for an early but limited emphasis on phonics, having children write their own stories from the very beginning and exposing children to well-written, interesting stories right from the start. Although many teachers in the District do exactly that, many do not.

Teachers are allowed to choose among several approved textbooks, and many evidently choose reading books that lack one or more of the components of a good reading program: letter sounds, sound blends, writing, or comprehension. The D.C. Public School System takes no position on which method of teaching reading is best, and thus schools and/or teachers are permitted to exercise their own beliefs, even if there is no evidence to substantiate that their beliefs are indeed methods effective for teaching and learning in reading.

All the evidence points to the fact that children learn to read better if they are encouraged to write. Although teachers may teach writing and even test their children's writing abilities, currently, there are no systemwide writing tests. In the absence of such tests, many teachers do not teach writing.

Elementary science. Few school systems require that science be taught sufficiently in elementary school, especially in urban school systems serving low-income or minority populations where progress in reading and mathematics (as shown by improvements in test scores) has been the main focus in recent years. Few children within the District are prepared for difficult science courses in high school, few enroll in them, and few of those who do enroll succeed.

Science is inherently appealing to young children, who are curious about the natural world regardless of their circumstances. Science has meaty content, unlike the nearly contentless subjects of reading, mathematics, and writing. Science can be used effectively to teach reading, writing, mathematics, and reasoning and may indeed be the most integrative discipline available to elementary children.

A handful of District schools have excellent hands-on elementary science programs. Mostly, though, elementary school children are not given much preparation for the more difficult science courses they will encounter in junior and senior high school, probably because science learning is not tested at the elementary level.

Art, music, physical education, and foreign languages. Currently, because of the realities of funding and resource constraints, principals have authority to omit art, music, or physical education specialists from the school staff, a step that too often results in the complete omission of instruction in these subjects. Furthermore, except in a few elementary schools, no foreign language is available. A strong case can be made that all District children, whether they attend a small school or a large one, should have access to a full-service elementary program. Although the Committee generally favors more authority and discretion at the school level, a principal's discretion should not include the right to deprive students of experiences that are vital to the complete development of their human capacities.

(c.) Junior and senior high schools

The Committee observed that at the secondary level (junior and senior high schools), as is the case throughout the system, everyone needs to have high expectations for students. Frequently, too little is expected of secondary school students, and as a result, many appear to have little interest in school. Furthermore, there is a paucity of offerings for gifted and talented students; even ordinary college-bound students may have trouble accumulating the credits needed for admission to college. The greatest need appears to be for a concerted effort to make school a place where students want to be.

Graduation requirements. Secondary students in the District can now avoid academic requirements set in many demanding school systems, and most students are able to satisfy almost all graduation requirements before their junior year and attend school half-time during their junior and senior years. Studies of American students' achievement in mathematics and the sciences that compare them with students in other countries show that the main reason for low student achievement in this country is the lack of exposure to content. Disadvantaged students in other countries, when compared with similar students in the United States, are exposed to more difficult content and are expected to learn it. Not surprisingly, they outperform American students.

Foreign language offerings and requirements. One problem identified by the Committee is that some students are unable to take two or three consecutive years of a foreign language, especially if they start the language in a junior high school. Because

every building principal appears to have the right to choose which languages will be offered and for how many years, some students find that they will not be allowed to progress in an orderly sequence of foreign language instruction.

Secondary mathematics. The failure rate of algebra students suggests a need to provide students with earlier exposure to algebraic concepts so that they can succeed in integrated mathematics classes in junior high. Also, some high schools do not offer calculus; in such schools, students interested in studying mathematics or science in college are deprived of a valuable prerequisite.

Secondary language arts. The D.C. Public School System does not currently require tests of secondary school writing abilities. Students are rarely required to write in English classes, and there is little evidence that students are required to write in subject matter classes either. Writing, like mathematics and music, requires continuous practice. Moreover, it appears to be an especially powerful teaching tool in all subject areas.

Advanced placement courses. Although most schools offer some advanced placement courses, some do not offer their students this option of possibly "placing out" of freshman college courses. Moreover, for many advanced placement courses the standards for admission and level of instruction offered are so low that the course does not truly prepare the students for the advanced placement tests.

(d.) Vocational education

As is true elsewhere across the nation, the emphasis over the past decade has been on academic skills as the primary form of vocational education. As school districts have gathered experience in the effects of mandating more years of academic course-taking for all students, many have discovered that the students who were formerly in vocational courses are failing academic courses that give them neither academic nor vocational skills. New approaches to vocational education, which integrate and coordinate the teaching of academic skills in both academic and vocational classes, appear to be a promising option for many students who want to enter the workforce directly after high school. In some places, vocational mathematics students are outperforming academic mathematics students.

Although District public schools offer some outstanding opportunities for vocational students, there appear to be fewer of these opportunities now than there were in previous years. Slightly more than 3,000 students are currently enrolled in vocational education programs, and attendance in these programs remains a major problem. These facts support the decision by the Board of Education to reconsider vocational education programs.

(e.) Bilingual education

The Committee recognizes the existence of a special task force created by the Superintendent of Schools concerning bilingual education. Originally, the intent of the Committee was to review the work of the task force and to lend support as appropriate. However, the task force has not completed its work to date; therefore, the Committee offers the following observations.

The District public schools need to give greater recognition to the growing number of ethnic minorities in the District who speak other languages. One of the most powerful ways to recognize a minority group is to value its native language. Another form of recognition is for English-only speakers to learn another language by taking advantage of the presence of foreign language speakers. In some District school communities, a sufficient critical mass of

foreign language speakers exists to warrant the development of two-way bilingual programs.

Furthermore, the Committee notes the existence of several outstanding bilingual programs in the District. The Oyster School has received national recognition as one of the truly outstanding programs in the country. The Multicultural Intern Program offers unique programs to language minority students not served well in other schools.

During several meetings with members of the bilingual community, the Committee learned of significant problems that they face, including a shortage of bilingual teachers and administrators, a lack of sensitivity on the part of some teachers and administrators to the needs of students and parents; and particular difficulties in enrolling bilingual students in public schools.

(f.) Special education

The Committee did not have the opportunity to review special education programs in any depth, and therefore it believes that additional study is required.

One problem observed in the special education program is the placement of children with minimal learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia) in classes with children with behavior problems. Although such placements meet Federal requirements and are administratively convenient, they fail to serve the two separate populations adequately; the two groups need quite different programs. More aggressive parents are able to win expensive private placements for children because they can demonstrate that the D.C. Public School System does not meet their children's needs.

Although some children with reading and/or language disabilities also have behavior problems, many do not. The children without behavior problems would be better served in regular classes, provided that their teachers had adequate training and support to address their educational needs. Building the systemwide capacity to meet the needs of these children would appear to be a good investment because the number of children in the general population with fundamental language deficits seems to be increasing.

(g.) Student self-esteem and values education

Parents and staff spoke eloquently at the town meetings held by the Committee about the need to help children and youth in the D.C. Public School System to develop solid personal and citizenship values and to value themselves. The Committee believes that genuine success in school is the most powerful way to build a child's self-esteem, and virtually all of the recommendations in this report are geared to making that success possible. At the same time, the content of the school program can make a contribution to the development of important values and self-esteem.

One frequently expressed need is for a curriculum that gives all students a sense of their own heritage. Although the present curriculum contains information on the heritage of African-Americans and other minority groups, many teachers have expressed the view that the material is thin and repetitive. The Committee shares that view.

Similarly, textbooks have made attempts over the past few decades to eliminate racial and ethnic stereotypes and to include information on the history of minorities and women and their contributions to literature. To a lesser degree, publishers of science textbooks have made efforts to include the scientific contributions of minorities and women.

Unfortunately, multicultural information in school books has remained at the level of tokenism for several decades. Brief biographies and conspicuous pictures of minorities and women who have "made it" in the majority culture appear in textbooks

but are seldom integrated into the text material.

The primary responsibility for shallow textbook treatment of multicultural content rests with the buyers of textbooks—adoption committees in states and cities around the nation. In the District public schools, as elsewhere, textbook evaluators use mechanical criteria to judge publisher compliance with social and cultural goals, and the publishers, in turn, mirror those mechanical criteria.

In a number of states and cities around the nation, there is renewed interest in a deeper, more satisfying approach to multicultural education. The time is ripe for the D.C. Public School System to join with other jurisdictions that share this goal. Individually, each interested state or city is not large enough to compel publishers to generate better textbooks, but collectively, there is enough market power to interest publishers in a new approach. The D.C. Public School System is in a strong position to assert national leadership and cause productive changes to occur in textbooks.

With respect to the creation of a more personal environment in District schools, the recently published study of District school dropouts establishes that many dropouts feel alienated from their teachers and schools. Teachers also reported feelings of alienation in the survey they completed.

Concerning values, the Committee recognizes the work of the Commission on Values-Centered Goals formed by the Board of Education and the effort of the school system to implement its recommendations. The recommendations of the Commission are extremely important to the long-term success of children in the school system. There is a growing recognition throughout the country that values must be taught in schools as well as at home.

The Committee is aware of a number of programs that have proved to be effective in this area. Philosophy for Children, Matthew Lipman's program, offers children a chance to recognize and grapple with ethical issues in life.

The Paideia project, now used at Shepherd Elementary School and Jefferson Junior High School, gives children a much-needed opportunity to test their ideals against those of others. Currently, District teachers from other schools are receiving training in the techniques of conducting Paideia seminars.

Character Education, developed by the American Institute for Character Education in San Antonio, Texas, is now being used in a large number of Chicago public schools and is credited with improving student learning and behavior.

Many observers, including the famed child psychiatrist Dr. Robert Coles, believe that children do not acquire values through discussion, as in the programs just mentioned, but instead through organized opportunities to perform services to the community. Community service opportunities are available to some District students but not to all.

The programs just mentioned seem to be promising ways to prepare students to deal with value questions, to raise their self-esteem, and to advance their capacity to think. Yet, to be effective, all of the programs require careful preparation and training of teachers and principals.

(h.) Educational technology

A major study conducted by the Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress, suggests that computers can "contribute to important improvements in learning. These tools can play an even greater role in advancing the substance and process of education, both by helping children acquire basic skills and by endowing them with more sophisticated skills so they can acquire and apply knowledge over their lifetimes."

It appears, on the basis of a cursory review, that the current access to computers

in District public schools is quite low: 30 minutes per day per student at most and generally much less time. In some of the high schools, there is approximately one computer for every 40 to 45 students, substantially fewer computers than the national average of one computer for every 30 students.

The Committee believes that the District should invest the personnel and resources necessary to study the impact of technology on learning on an ongoing basis. The District can facilitate the wise use of computers by encouraging experimentation, studying the effects, and supporting what works.

Summary of the Recommendation

5. The District of Columbia should take steps to revitalize its curricula, including

Concerning the core curricula:

(a) Contract with a series of subject-based outside groups with no vested interest in the current Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) program to review and revise the curriculum, with the following objectives:

(1) Reduce the number of detailed objectives while still providing general guidance to teachers on curriculum;

(2) Adjust the syllabus so that it reflects the best that is currently known about teaching, learning, and assessment in particular subject areas, including a richer reading program with a stronger emphasis on writing, the teaching of higher order comprehension skills, and an emphasis on mathematics concepts at least equal to the current emphasis on computation; and

(3) Ensure that the curriculum and testing programs are fully integrated.

Concerning elementary education:

(b) Replace the current assessment program for mathematics with state-of-the-art tests that are integral to instruction itself. New tests should provide students and teachers with prompt feedback, allowing teachers to pinpoint student misunderstandings and correct their instruction accordingly. New tests should test students' ability to apply mathematics to the solution of real-life problems.

(c) Take a position, based on research and knowledge of best practices in reading instruction, on essential components of a strong reading program and the range of permissible approaches to the teaching of reading. Whether reading textbooks are selected centrally or left to the discretion of local schools, the school system should identify and support a limited number of reading textbooks that reflect practices known to promote growth in reading.

(d) Mandate the teaching of inquiry-based science in all elementary schools, to be phased in over a period of three to five years. As a part of the school-based staff development program, principals should identify those teachers in their schools who can teach inquiry-based science, or are willing to learn. The school system should identify those schools with outstanding programs and assist in the dissemination of knowledge and skill in elementary science teaching and assessment. Periodically, the school system should administer performance tests in science and provide funds for elementary, hands-on science laboratories, equipment, and materials.

(e) Mandate art, music, physical education,

and foreign language programs in all elementary schools.

Concerning secondary education:

(f) Increase graduation requirements for all students not enrolled in special education by requiring two years of a foreign language (one year currently), two years of laboratory science (one year currently), and world history.

(g) Reorganize the entire mathematics sequence so that children study each aspect of mathematics in more depth, at a greater pace, and with less repetition of rudimentary skills. Algebra should be introduced during the elementary school sequence so that students are prepared for junior and senior high school material. Mathematics textbooks should be chosen to reflect these notions of greater depth, less repetition, and earlier exposure to more complex mathematics. All high schools should offer a course in calculus. Peer coaching of junior and senior high school mathematics teachers should be an essential component of a revised mathematics sequence.

(h) Expand and enrich systemwide policies and training programs regarding writing. The system should require students to write more frequently and enable teachers to use the best practices in the teaching of writing across the curriculum. Because one of the major obstacles to a strong writing program is the out-of-school time teachers must spend grading written work, the school system should devise additional measures to reduce the grading burden on teachers, either through writing laboratories, reduced class loads, or employment of lay readers.

(i) Make available to all high school students the option of taking advanced placement courses, at least in English and mathematics. Moreover, there should be some systemwide prerequisites for admission to advanced placement courses, such as a passing grade in prior courses and a specified level of reading competence. Without such admission standards, advanced placement courses are advanced in name only, and the more able students in the class may not be adequately prepared for college.

Concerning vocational education:

(j) Appoint a panel of outstanding citizens and experts in vocational education to review the current vocational offerings.

Concerning bilingual education:

(k) Recognize and expand existing two-way bilingual programs and establish programs in all parts of the city. The curriculum in bilingual education schools should be aligned with the overall school curriculum so that all students have access to material in the content areas.

(l) Support model programs addressing unique needs of bilingual students, such as the Multicultural Intern Program.

(m) Provide special training for teachers in schools with large numbers of bilingual students and increase the numbers of bilingual teachers and administrators in those schools.

Concerning special education:

(n) Recognize the special and specific educational needs of children with minimal learning disabilities, and mount appropriate special classes and mainstream placements for them.

Recognizing the importance of providing a quality special education program and the high cost of delivering certain aspects of the program, the school system should conduct an in-depth review

of this area.

Concerning student self-esteem and values:

(c) Implement the recommendations of the Commission on Values-Centered Goals.

(p) Provide training for teachers concerning the teaching of values to children and methods of establishing and communicating high expectations in all aspects of school.

(q) Recognizing that the learning of values and the acquisition of self-esteem stem in large part from success in school, the Committee notes that other recommendations link directly with improving self-esteem and teaching values, including:

(1) Making school interesting and raising standards;

(2) Providing enrichment programs during the summer and after school; and

(3) Beginning the educational experience with sound early childhood programs to enhance the likelihood of success.

(r) Introduce African-American materials and teaching throughout the curricula, beginning with early childhood programs, in order to promote self-esteem.

(s) Form links with those states and school districts that have already adopted new curricular mandates in the area of multicultural education to form a market powerful enough to induce publishers to develop appropriate textbooks. In the meantime, the school system should collaborate with local universities on the development of its own materials to supplement the existing curriculum and surmount the deficiencies in existing textbooks.

(t) Design training materials that empower school faculties to choose textbooks and other instructional materials that are highly motivating to students. The training materials should reflect new knowledge about the characteristics of effective textbooks. The number of textbooks should be limited, calibrated with testing, consistent with training of teachers, and tied into systemwide goals (e.g., multicultural curriculum).

Concerning technology:

(u) Expand efforts to use instructional technology, including computers, on an experimental and pilot basis to increase the academic performance of students.

C. STANDARDS THAT PROMOTE LEARNING

(1.) Introduction

In addition to the higher curriculum standards discussed in Section IIB, the Committee has identified a number of other areas where standards, different from those in existence today, should be changed to help promote learning.

(2.) Discussion of the Committee's Observations

(a.) Introduction of performance tests

In general, the Committee found that the District, not unlike most school districts across the country, places a heavy reliance on basic skills tests. The Committee heard from a number of experts around the country who warned of excessive reliance on such tests. The problem is not testing in and of itself; rather, it is ensuring that the tests used measure all that is important, including critical thinking and ingenuity.

The Committee is aware that a number of efforts are underway around the country to improve tests. It was told that the efforts underway by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, as well as others, represent important progress in the area of testing. Nevertheless, having tests serve as diagnostic tools for teachers, while giving parents and students information about achievement and overall school performance, remains a national goal that is not yet realized.

The Committee recognizes that the District is not in a position to lead changes in testing nationwide. It is a costly, complex undertaking in which the states rather than individual cities traditionally have taken the lead.

Nevertheless, there are a number of areas in which the Committee believes that reform would be useful.

First, the Committee recommends sample testing using instruments issued under the National Assessment of Educational Progress at select grade levels to help measure overall performance of the system. These tests are rich instruments for determining knowledge and subject skill competence.

Second, turning to individual subjects, the Committee recommends the use of a systemwide writing test at grades 4, 6, and 8 to be scored by teachers trained in holistic scoring methods and hired to score the tests after regular school hours.

Third, concerning science, the Committee recommends at the elementary level the periodic use of performance tests in science to assess students' abilities to apply scientific knowledge and skills in a laboratory context.

Fourth, concerning mathematics, the Committee recommends the use of state-of-the-art tests integral to instruction. Most important, these tests should provide teachers with prompt feedback. The tests should examine the ability of students to apply mathematics to real life problems.

(b.) An honors diploma

Many states have raised the minimum standards for graduation from high school by, for example, requiring that students pass a minimum competency examination or mandating certain coursework.

The Committee considered a number of options in this area. The Committee rejected passage of a minimum competency examination primarily because of the numerous problems experienced by other jurisdictions in using such examinations and the tendency for school systems to gear instruction to minimum skill levels, thereby depressing overall performance.

Instead, the Committee believes that standards should be raised in the system by introducing an honors diploma. The school system should determine the basic requirements for this diploma. Consideration should be given to achieving a certain average, taking more than the current requirements for Carnegie units, and perhaps passing a "Regents-type" examination.

Within the D.C. Public School System, a precedent for such a system already exists; the Banneker High School requires additional Carnegie Units for graduation.

The honors diploma would be intended to recognize high achievers in the school system. A student could achieve this diploma in any high school and under any course of study. If a test becomes a component of the requirement, it should be knowledge based. Students who do not receive such a diploma would still have to meet the course and other requirements described earlier, and the standards for the general diploma would require the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the world of work or in higher education. The honors diploma would connote distinction.

The Committee recognizes the complexities involved in the development and issuance of such a diploma; therefore the Committee recommends that the school system identify a group to determine the specific criteria and any tests that might be used and the appropriate curriculum and other changes that might be required to implement this recommendation.

(c.) Revised promotion standards at the early level

Numerous studies of early-grade retention policies, along with the D.C. Public School System's own study of dropouts, make it abundantly clear that the practice of retaining children at grade level on the basis of their failure to reach prescribed levels is the greatest single cause of dropping out. This research is summed up as follows: Those who continue to retain pupils at grade level do so despite cumulative research evidence showing that the potential for negative effects consistently outweighs positive outcomes.

At the elementary level, promotion requires demonstrated mastery of specific reading and mathematics skills at each level. Until this year, promotions have been granted even if students were deficient in one of these subjects. By the end of the 1989-90 school year, students will be required to be on grade level in both subjects to be promoted.

The Committee believes that when children fail to acquire the skills for their age or grade level, the failure needs to be seen as a responsibility of the school system, not the young children. The solution is not in-grade retention, but aggressive programs to help children catch up.

The Committee has observed a number of programs across the country designed to help children catch up with their peers. In Norfolk, VA, the Spiral Program lowers the student to teacher ratio in classes for children who are falling behind their peers at a particular grade level.

The Committee recommends a number of other programs for students who are behind, ranging from after-school tutoring to summer programs.

The Committee is concerned that the existing in-grade retention policy, especially with respect to young students, will exacerbate the dropout problem without achieving the desired objective of promoting learning. Therefore, the Committee believes that there should be no rigid policy for promotion in the early grades that depends on the results on basic skills tests; instead, it believes that schools—principals and teachers—should have greater flexibility in reviewing each student's situation and make a professional judgment on a case-by-case basis.

(d.) Discipline

All educators agree that discipline is necessary for effective education to occur. It is essential that classrooms be clean and orderly, that students feel safe in the building, and that teachers command classrooms that are exciting and fun but orderly and conducive to learning.

High standards of discipline are particularly important in schools that face potential problems with dropouts and low attendance. Schools with effective discipline are defined as those in which principals are perceived as supporting teachers and assume the leadership role in handling discipline problems and those in which parents, teachers, administrators, and students are all actively involved in establishing a safe and secure school climate. These schools operate within the framework of districtwide policies that insist on good behavior and provide broad guidelines for what that behavior should be.

The best way to develop a good program of discipline is to attack the sources of student discontent—students' boredom and their failure to achieve. But a sound discipline policy is essential to balance the interests of most students with those of students who may create particular problems for teachers and administrators.

Such a policy must be accompanied by adequate support services for students—counseling, attendance, psychological, and social—to enable them to deal with personal or family problems that often lead to truancy or misbehavior. During the town meetings and in Committee conversations with school personnel and parents, there was a consensus that such services are inadequate given the challenges. The Committee understands that the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools have requested resources in 1990 to strengthen these services; the Committee supports that request.

In addition, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools have issued a comprehensive discipline policy for the District. This policy provides for progressively tougher penalties depending on the infraction. Automatic suspension from school, for a minimum of 25 school days to a maximum of 1 year, will result from the most serious infraction—possession or threatened use of any weapon or the distribution of drugs.

The Committee reviewed discipline policies in a number of school districts across the country and found that, in general, school systems have moved to tighten guidelines for those students who show severe behavior problems. Furthermore, many school districts offer alternative programs for delinquent children, and many school districts, if these programs are unsuccessful, expel students as a last resort.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools have moved to tighten discipline guidelines over the last several years, and the Committee fully supports these efforts.

However, the Committee has heard, from many principals and teachers, that there are no effective alternatives for dealing with problem students. In other words, even after a long-term suspension for a major infraction, a student returns to his or her former school. This problem is particularly acute for those administrators who must deal with students who have been institutionalized (e.g., in Oak Hill or Cedar Knoll). Without an alternative school to assist these students, they are placed back into the regular school population, where they are often resistant to authority and frequently disruptive to the educational process.

In 1986-87, the District experimented with a pilot alternative school, but the Committee was told that implementation problems resulted in its discontinuation. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that alternatives should be made available to

students. The Committee proposes the creation of an "alternative school" from which students would have to graduate before returning to another high school. This school should be staffed by highly skilled professionals capable of helping such students, and the expectations and requirements need to be communicated to parents and to students.

Therefore, the Committee suggests that the Board of Education reconsider the establishment of some form of an alternative school and that the school administration address implementation concerns prior to the establishment of a program. The Committee also supports mandatory counseling as part of this program and suggests that severe offenders who do not respond to assistance and counseling be expelled from the school system.

The Committee also observed several programs in existing schools where minor misbehavior problems, that would otherwise result in suspending a student and in effect requiring him or her to spend time in the streets, were dealt with by principals by requiring work in school. The Committee fully supports such creative efforts.

(e.) A systemwide attendance policy

Effective learning is not possible without persistent effort. Learning requires hard work and time. The Committee is recommending an expansion of the school day and the school year that is designed to increase the amount of time children spend engaged in productive activity. An additional related change that is necessary is to set in place a systemwide attendance policy. Currently, good attendance is the stated goal, but no specific, systemwide penalties for nonattendance exist.

The Committee believes that many students currently do only the minimum amount of work necessary to obtain a diploma. In some cases, the system's lack of attendance requirements allows students to miss a large number of classes and still receive a passing grade.

When the Committee talked with principals and teachers at the junior and senior high school levels, it discovered that many have instituted strict attendance requirements in their particular schools. Most principals see such a policy as a reasonable standard that students should meet, with the provision of reasonable safeguards for legitimate exceptions, such as prolonged illness. Students cannot learn if they are not in class, and although the Committee does not have a view on what the specific standard should be, it believes that the Board of Education should review existing policies and create such a standard to be applied on a systemwide basis.

(f.) Requirements to participate in athletic events

Currently, in the District, students are required to maintain a cumulative C average to participate in interscholastic athletics. The Committee generally endorses policy efforts that attempt to establish a reasonable balance between academic requirements and participation in sports. However, the Committee is concerned that the existing policy may exacerbate problems for students who start out behind. A more appropriate strategy might be to require that a C average be maintained in the previous semester rather than cumulatively to play interscholastic sports. In that way, students would have an incentive to improve their grades and would view the possibility of participating in sports events as something within their reach.

Summary of the Recommendations

6. The District of Columbia should upgrade its standards for student performance by introducing performance tests for writing, mathematics, and science, and by issuing an honors diploma for high achiev-

ers who will be required to maintain a certain average, take additional courses (e.g., 23 Carnegie units), and perhaps pass a Regents-type examination.

Further, the District of Columbia should revise its practice of automatic in-grade retention for children failing to meet certain requirements in elementary and junior high school, and substitute a case-by-case review combined with a comprehensive and sophisticated tutoring program after school and during the summers, and special programs such as low student/teacher ratio classes for students who are falling behind their peers at particular grade level. Retention in grade is recognized as a major cause of dropouts.

7. The District of Columbia should revise guidelines and programs related to the discipline of students in the following ways. First, for hard-core, serious offenders who return from a suspension, attendance in alternative programs, created and made available by the school system, should be mandatory. Counseling also should be mandatory. A student should be required to "graduate" from this alternative program before returning to one of the other high schools in the school system. Ultimately, anyone who fails to respond in this alternative environment, and continues to cause severe problems for fellow students and teachers, must be expelled.

The District of Columbia should set a systemwide attendance policy that would require a student not to miss class more than x days in order to pass a course or be promoted to the next grade. This attendance policy should be structured to permit reasonable exceptions.

The District of Columbia should revise its policy for participation in athletic events to require students to maintain a C average in the semester immediately preceding the one in which participation in sports will occur, rather than a cumulative C average.

D. EXPANSION OF THE SCHOOL DAY AND THE SCHOOL YEAR

(1.) Introduction

One of the most far-reaching recommendations of the Committee is to increase the amount of time that children spend at school and to improve the quality of programs, including athletics, available for students during the extended day.

(2.) Background: Major Characteristics of the D.C. Public School System

The current school year is 180 six-hour days. The typical school day runs from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. for all grades.

A number of school districts follow this pattern. However, evidence exists that, on average, District students are shortchanged.

For example, District high school students have 270 minutes of class scheduled per day. The Department of Education reports that in the average U.S. high school, there are 310 minutes of class per day. In addition, in many surrounding jurisdictions, as well as many other cities, the school day runs for 6.5 hours.

Moreover, the instructional program of the District is subject to a number of interruptions: organizational activities at the start of the school year, periods surrounding holidays, testing periods, activities following end-of-year testing, and numerous activities such as assemblies, picture-taking sessions, survey taking, special workshops, etc.

Nationally, the amount of time devoted to actual instruction and learning within the school year is remarkably low. Researchers place the actual time at between 25 percent and 50 percent of the school day, depending

on how the school is structured and organized. Observations in the District public schools confirm that a great deal of time is devoted to activities other than effective learning. Frequently, children are given desk work, and they lack the supervision and instruction to use this time effectively.

Moreover, there is some evidence that at-risk students do not use such time as effectively as their middle class counterparts.

Additional evidence suggests that certain practices in the District further reduce the amount of time devoted to instruction. "Pull-out" programs for compensatory education are a fairly routine practice. Some sports events that are scheduled after school cause students to miss classes.

Although some schools offer before- and after-school activities, including child care, sports, and clubs, participation in these activities is minimal. Some of this activity is paid for by Parent Teachers Associations, and as a result, there are disparities with respect to the availability of programs across the school system. The result is that programs are unavailable for children who need them most. Furthermore, the typical school does not have a wide variety of activities available for students after 3:00 P.M.

The overall quality of these extracurricular programs is low in comparison with programs in the surrounding jurisdictions and in other urban school systems. For example, the recent final report of the Task Force on Interscholastic Athletic Programs of the D.C. Public School System states: "Grossly inadequate and condemned facilities; substandard and insufficient amounts of equipment; dangerously ineffective security and safety measures; under-paid and poorly trained personnel and a drastic shortage of qualified coaches—all of these disturbing conditions dramatically illustrate the critical state of the program."

The Committee did not conduct an independent review of the sports program, except as it was related to the conditions of the facilities. Instead, it relied heavily on the work done by the Task Force, as well as conversations with sports experts within the public school system.

Despite the overall problems with extracurricular activities within the school system, the Committee also notes that there are a number of schools with after-school programs that are exciting, engage youngsters in productive activities, and rely heavily on volunteers.

(3.) Discussion of Practices Elsewhere and Their Implications

In other nations, children spend considerably more time in school. In Japan, 5th grade students spend 50 percent more time in school than do their American counterparts. As Table II-4 indicates, Japanese children spend more time in school during the week, more time in class engaged in academic activities, and have a longer school year.

Increasing the amount of time spent on learning correlates positively with achievement if the time is used productively. However, it makes little sense to lengthen the amount of time devoted to instruction unless children find the overall instructional program challenging and simulating.

Remedial assistance in the District, as in the nation, generally is provided during the normal school day and thus does not result in increased instructional time. In the District, most children who are below grade level in reading or mathematics leave their regular classroom several times a week for computer-assisted instruction in the laboratory or for tutoring.

In a nationwide study of remedial programs, it was found that only 2 percent of public elementary schools offer remedial

Table II-4.
Comparison of Amount of Time Spent by American and Japanese Students in Academic Activities.

	Grade 1	Grade 5
Average number of hours spent in school per week		
American	29.9	30.4
Japanese	30.7	37.3
Chinese	27.5	44.1
Total amount of time spent on academic activities		
American	69.8%	64.5%
Japanese	79.2%	87.4%
Chinese	85.1%	91.5%
Number of days in the school year		
American	180	180
Japan	240	240

Source: Internal memorandum, U.S. Department of Education.

assistance before or after school and about 10 percent offer it during the summer. Most classroom teachers report that when students attend remedial classes, they miss activities in the same subject or in other basic skills.

Strategies that are developed and implemented on a schoolwide basis are often the most effective ways of dealing with the acute needs of disadvantaged children. Schools with high percentages of low-income students face problems (more acutely than do other schools)—such as vandalism and theft, truancy, chronic tardiness, low parental involvement, and disruptive behavior—that must be addressed on a schoolwide basis if improvement is to occur. Simply making available special instruction for particular students while failing to address the overall climate of the school will fail.

Gains in achievement scores resulting from remedial programs are frequently lost during the summer months. Numerous studies of the effectiveness of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (subsequently changed to Chapter I), the Federal compensatory education program, as well as other studies of remedial programs, show that effective programs allow children to close the gap during the school year. For example, it is not unusual for children to gain 1.5 years in reading during the school year.

However, what is disturbing is that these gains are frequently lost during the

summer months. In other words, when the child returns to school, testing indicates that there has been a significant drop-off during the summer months. As a result, the overall gaps between children persist despite evidence of program success.

There are significant benefits from extracurricular activities; in general, they help improve self-esteem, engage students in productive and useful activities, keep them off the street, contribute to the overall success of individual students, and help make school fun and exciting. Furthermore, students who engage in extracurricular activities are more likely to stay in school and to graduate.

Focused, intensive instructional time correlates positively with achievement. Many schools are experimenting with creating larger blocks of time devoted strictly to instruction.

The program at Jefferson Junior High School incorporates many of the programs just cited. In this school, there are limited pull-out activities for remediation; effective remediation occurs after school in a number of forms. Innovative approaches to teaching and learning are being used, such as adjusting class size per teacher depending on the achievement levels of individual students. Students who need more help are enrolled in smaller classes. After-school activities, including an active sports program, hobbies, and enrichment trips, are in place to engage children. All children enrolled in the school must participate in at least one extracurricular activity.

Concerning practices in other districts, although there has been experimentation in schools in a number of areas, the Committee could find no school system that has expanded significantly on a districtwide basis the amount of time children spend in school. Cost is generally cited as a prohibitive factor. Nevertheless, there are a number of schools that offer a variety of child care and after-school programs and that are open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. during the week and on Saturdays.

In addition, districts experiencing significant growth keep schools open year-round to maximize the use of facilities. In general, however, most students in these systems attend school approximately 180 days per year.

The Committee believes that the characteristics of the District student population argue strongly for restructuring and extending the school day. Over 50 percent of the student population comes from female-headed households. Most of the mothers work. As a result, children are largely on their own or in someone else's care after school and during the summer. Drugs and attendant violence are a reality. While at home, children often do not have a quiet room in which to study. The well documented impact of the cycle of poverty calls for radical solutions to help children to succeed.

Extension of the school day and the school year will help improve the self-esteem of children by engaging them in productive activities in which they can succeed, see that others care about their welfare, and can enrich their environment.

There is a clear need to extend the practices of Jefferson Junior High School to other schools throughout the system.

(4.) Discussion of the Recommendations

The Committee recommends several changes in the present use of the school day.

First, remedial programs in the District are largely conducted during the school day by taking children out of classroom instruction in the same subject and therefore do not add instructional time devoted to at-risk children. Over one-fourth of District elementary schools are eligible to operate under a special provision of the Chapter I program that allows schoolwide efforts to

deal with children in need of remedial assistance. Chapter I funds can, and should, be devoted to this purpose. Schools most effectively serve low-income children when they emphasize a number of features at once: clear goals; high expectations; planning that involves the entire school staff; a safe, disciplined, orderly school environment; and the involvement of parents.

The Committee recommends that the school system set clear guidelines regarding remedial assistance, including appropriate use of the "effective schools model". As schools implement their own plans, Chapter I funds should be put to use to assist in reform.

In addition, as the school day and the school year are expanded these funds can be targeted for particular tutoring and other activities on a more intensive basis.

The Committee also recommends restructuring the sports schedule. The current transportation schedules often disrupt instructional activities. It is not unusual for students attending away games to have to leave early in the afternoon despite the fact that the game is scheduled for, say, 4:00 P.M. In effect, the transportation schedule is built around the busing requirements of the special education program. Transportation should be provided to students based on the needs of those participating in the sporting event.

On the basis of their individual goals and objectives, individual schools need to take steps to structure activities within the day to maximize the time available for instruction. Schools need to have the authority to take the necessary steps to accomplish this objective. This recommendation is consistent with the concept of school-based management, in which a principal and the faculty, in collaboration with parents, have the authority and responsibilities necessary to operate effectively.

Concerning expansion of the school day, the Committee recommends discussions with the teachers' union to achieve an expansion of the instructional day by 30 minutes, focusing at the senior high level, to take effect by the 1990-1991 school year. This expansion will allow for 30 additional minutes of instructional time during the school day, thereby increasing overall effective instructional time throughout the year by as much as 15 percent. This could be accomplished without increasing the amount of time teachers must be at school.

Rather than mandating how the extra 30 minutes should be used, individual schools should be required to develop plans for improvements, including the use of this additional time. If the school day were to be extended, examples of the kinds of decisions that might have to be made at the school level are: creation of a seventh period, longer class periods at the secondary school level, and classes that meet on a less than daily basis.

There is a critical need to build the self-esteem of the student population in the District. One effective method for accomplishing this is to make activities available after school that are enriching, fun, and challenging. These would range from interscholastic sports to intramural sports to various types of clubs.

More effort should be devoted to the structuring of after-school programs. Teachers would be paid a stipend to advise clubs, sports, or other programs. There would be peer tutoring programs available for students needing remedial assistance. Additional recreational and other programs would be staffed by volunteers and/or paid workers from other public or private programs, such as the Recreation Department, the Boy Scouts, etc.

Keeping the schools open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. will have a number of benefits. Although after-school attendance would be optional, if extracurricular activities are attractive, significant numbers of students are likely to participate. Children

would be engaged in productive activities, they would be kept off the streets, and they would not have to fend for themselves.

Over the long term, the school year should be extended. Children need to be engaged during the summer months in productive activities. Remedial instruction programs using Chapter I funds should be available to all at-risk children; attendance should be mandatory for children who do not meet criteria for promotion, preventing them from losing the gains made during the school year.

In addition, summer programs, such as field trips and various enrichment activities, would be available to children in the morning. Sports and other events would be scheduled in the afternoon. Also, programs that enable older children to participate in half-day programs and work in the afternoon should be created.

As a general proposition, summer programs would not be an extension of the regular school program. They would be created, and treated, as something special and unique. They would be especially designed to fill in the gaps that currently put certain children at risk of educational failure. For example, children would see role models not otherwise encountered, visit colleges to see the possible benefits of success in school, spend time at the numerous museums throughout the city, engage in various field trips, pursue hobbies, etc. Children would interact with adults who have a deep interest in their success.

These programs would be staffed by a wide variety of people, including teachers, volunteers, aides, recreation experts, and coaches. Most important, the Committee recommends using the summer months to bring professionals with unique experiences into the school system under special short-term arrangements. These individuals might not otherwise have the opportunity to work with children in the District and would provide special expertise and assistance.

A Summary of the Recommendations

8. The school system should make several changes to improve the use of the existing instructional day, including:

(a) Reduce programs that pull children out of classes for remediation in the same subject. Eligible schools should use remedial funds to support schoolwide adoption of instructional practices known to be effective with at-risk children. Remedial assistance should be provided after school, during the summer, and through select pull-out activities that increase the time and quality of overall instruction.

(b) Revise transportation schedules to allow student participation in sporting events but not at the expense of instructional time.

(c) Restructure, to the extent possible, periods of time devoted to organizing the school year, holding holiday events, and carrying on the traditional activities following end-of-year testing.

(d) Take other steps to minimize downtime and interruptions including providing schools with the flexibility to organize their own periods and schedules.

9. The school system should lengthen the school day by:

(a) Proposing the expansion of the instructional day at the high school level by one-half hour, beginning with the 1990-91 school year.

(b) Keeping schools open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. by the 1991-92 school year. This expansion will allow for child care activities (ages three to six), a full range of co-curricular activities, study halls, and remediation. An implementation plan should be developed and this pro-

cess should involve a number of agencies within the District of Columbia, including the Department of Recreation. Student participation should be voluntary, except for certain mandatory remediation programs.

10. The school system should lengthen the school year by offering a summer program in coordination with the Mayor's youth employment program and the Department of Recreation. The summer school program should involve:

(a) By 1993, expanding the school year from 180 days to 200 days, with the additional 20 days to be used for mandatory remediation and for enrichment and extracurricular activities. Participation in the latter would be voluntary.

(b) By 1994, expanding the school year to 220 days by offering programs during the summer to be used for remediation and enrichment during the morning and for sports activities, field trips, and employment related events in the afternoon.

The summer school program would be designed to provide activities and models for children that would promote their overall success in school in an environment that differs from the traditional classroom. The program should respond to the particular needs of at-risk children.

11. The school system should undertake a full-scale reform of the athletic program, focusing on facilities, personnel, and equipment. The Committee endorses a broad plan set out by an internal school system task force that addressed this issue. In general, there should be: better pay for coaches, an upgrading of standards, adequate equipment and supplies, and the use of paid personnel to run effective intramural programs after school.

E. A SYSTEM OF DISTINCTION WITH ALTERNATIVES OF EXCELLENCE

(1.) Introduction

The Committee's discussions with school system personnel throughout the country have led it to the conclusion that the District should create a system of high-quality public schools, each with a distinct identity, supported by a principal, faculty, and parents, all of whom have a real investment in the success of the students.

(2.) Practices in the D.C. Public School System

The District has a number of schools that offer students specialized programs. Banneker High School provides a rigorous academic curriculum for students who are interested in pursuing postsecondary education. The School Without Walls is an alternative academic, community involvement high school. Ballou Senior High School offers advanced mathematics and science courses, including calculus as a required subject. The Ellington School of the Arts offers specialized professional training in music, visual arts, theatre, and dance. At Dunbar High School, there is a pre-engineering program and a course of study that includes algebra, geometry, physical science, and computer science. Coolidge High School has a program geared to the teaching professions, with training in foreign languages, government, physics, calculus, English, and communication skills.

The District also offers its students in grades11 and 12 the High SCIP program, which enables them to take college courses and receive credit from their high school and tovard a college degree.

At the elementary level, a number of schools offer special programs that generally have not received much publicity. They range from schools with unique hands-on science programs to those using a particular pedagogical approach.

The District public schools attempt to offer a number of options and choices to parents and students.

Current enrollment policies are as follows:

- At the high school level, entering students may request admission to any high school in the city. Priority for admission is given to students residing in the high school's attendance area; transfer students are accepted randomly. For some schools, such as Banneker and Ellington, special applications are required.
- Junior high, middle, and elementary school students are generally required to attend schools within a specified attendance area, although there are procedures for parents to petition to send their children to other than neighborhood schools.

The Committee has been told that a significant number of parents do send their children to schools other than their neighborhood schools although the process, we are told, is an informal one.

Nevertheless, the Committee's general assessment is that despite the policies and procedures described above, many parents have limited options in selecting quality schools in the District—for several reasons.

First, there is a fundamental need to upgrade quality to have more meaningful alternatives. Although the District has attempted to mount special programs, the reality is that every school has not been brought up to a level where it offers the necessary academic program ultimately to qualify students for college and for work.

Second, in some instances, the options are not real. What is purported to be a school with a unique offering is in fact a program without the breadth and depth that the name suggests.

Third, information about schools and their unique programs is not widely disseminated. The Committee has heard a number of parents describe the difficulties they have in gaining rudimentary information about different schools and their respective offerings. Hence, true choice within the system is an option only for those who are knowledgeable.

(3.) The Committee's Discussions with Other School Systems

On February 21, 1989, the Committee met with Sy Fliegel, former Deputy Superintendent for Community District No. 4 in East Harlem, NY. In describing the process of reforming schools in that district, Mr. Fliegel emphasized the need to focus on the structure of a school system as a way of promoting change.

Mr. Fliegel said that parental choice can provide a powerful catalyst for educational reform by introducing a market mechanism to the public educational system. Most important, it can engender a sense of ownership on the part of parents, teachers, students, and administrators.

When families and students have the ability to choose their own schools and/or schools choose their students, there is a better match of individual to institution and service and greater mutual commitment. The result can be higher educational quality, more diversity, and a greater sense of satisfaction by students, parents, and faculty.

Mr. Fliegel emphasized that choice alone is no panacea. Rather, it provides the framework for improvements. He described a number of additional factors that are

important. First, schools must have a vision and a mission. Without explicit goals, a school will flounder. Second, teaching and learning cannot be separated. Principals and a core group of teachers must serve as instructional leaders in schools. Third, expectations must be high. Children will perform according to the expectations that adults have for them. Fourth, smaller schools are better; youngsters get lost in large junior and senior high schools. Fifth, and perhaps most important, diversity is required to help achieve ownership. If schools all look alike, act alike, and are treated as if they are similar entities by the central office, diversity and ownership are impossible to achieve.

As in the District, schools with unique offerings exist in many communities across the country, from New York City to Minneapolis, from Prince Georges County, to Miami, from San Diego to Chicago.

In Minneapolis, more than two-thirds of the district's students attend magnet schools. Richard Green, the late Superintendent in New York City and Minneapolis, said that the magnet system has had "a tremendous impact on attitude." "When parents can choose where their kids go to school," Dr. Green said, "they tend to give a lot of support to that effort. There's nothing except positives that can come out of that kind of experience."

In East Harlem, the entire system presently affords parents and students a variety of schools from which to choose.

One of the dilemmas that all school districts face when implementing such programs is agreeing on the appropriate number of special programs. Offering too few programs will result in improving the educational opportunities for only a few, and this is clearly not the goal of the D.C. Board of Education or this Committee. In the Committee's judgment, systems that offer comprehensive, districtwide programs are preferable. These systems are sometimes called controlled-choice.

Perhaps the most notable and successful examples of controlled-choice districts are those in Cambridge, MA; Montclair, NJ; and District 4 in New York City.

Both Cambridge and Montclair are relatively small districts and offer choice from the elementary through the secondary levels. Choice in District 4 occurs at the junior high school level and also involves admitting students from outside the district. In all of these districts, each school is considered distinctive, including schools that operate in a traditional fashion.

There are several benefits of successful controlled-choice systems:

- Well-designed programs can provide a better match between students' needs and the school program.
- Students and teachers report greater satisfaction.
- The faculty enjoys greater autonomy and more professional conditions.
- Parent involvement generally is higher.
- Student absenteeism and dropout rates and teacher turnover tend to be lower.

The costs of such systems include:

- Higher transportation costs (in some cases);
- Costs associated with publicizing the schools and school programs and ensuring that everyone has access to such information; and
- Start-up costs for schoolwide planning to develop a consensus about goals, themes, and program.

One of the significant benefits that can arise from creating diverse schools and more alternatives within a school system is a more personal environment for schooling.

School systems elsewhere are discovering ways of combatting the impersonality of schools. In Germany, schools with large

numbers of Turkish guest-worker children are reporting dramatically increased student achievement by creating small, stable groups of children and teachers. Groups of children and teams of teachers stay together for several years, and smaller groups of children work together in "table groups" for long periods of time. Teachers get to know the children and their parents, and the children feel as if they have a "home" at school.

In Rochester, NY, a home-based guidance system groups teachers with 20 children in a homeroom period. The teachers counsel the children, get to know them and their parents over a period of time, and sometimes make home visits.

The model developed by Dr. James P. Comer of Yale University for involving teachers, children, and parents in a more familial circle has shown great promise in raising the self-esteem and improving the social skills of children.

Slavin's Cooperative Learning techniques have been found to increase student achievement and also to increase children's capacity to work with others.

Other school districts have created separate schools within a single building to create a setting in which every student is known by an adult. The Coalition of Essential Schools, which was set up Dr. Ted Sizer, Dean of the Education School of Brown University, uses such an approach, combined with a number of other school-based reforms. Sy Fliegel described the efforts in East Harlem to make junior high schools smaller and more intimate.

(4.) Postsecondary Options Plans

Postsecondary options plans permit students in grades 11 and 12 to take courses at postsecondary institutions for high school and/or college credit.

In some plans, state funds that would ordinarily be paid to the participating student's public school district instead go to the postsecondary institution, although if the student is part time at both institutions, the state funds are divided proportionately. Other plans double-fund or otherwise hold the public school district harmless while paying the student's tuition at the postsecondary institution; that is, they fund both institutions. In at least one plan, the costs of the postsecondary courses are borne by the pupil. Postsecondary options plans of the sort where state public school funds follow a high school student to a postsecondary course taken for high school and/or college credit are not widespread, nor do many students take advantage of the plan when they exist.

Participation in postsecondary options plans is generally voluntary both for students and postsecondary institutions (which generally include community colleges, vocational-technical schools and four-year colleges and universities). Some states limit participation to public postsecondary institutions; others have no restrictions. Minnesota students opting to attend sectarian colleges may only take nonsectarian courses to be eligible for state funding. However, the inclusion of religious institutions in Minnesota's plan is being challenged in the courts.

Finally, there are some postsecondary option plans that were established on the initiative of local districts and postsecondary institutions. In other words, these plans were not created by virtue of state legislation. Under some of these plans, colleges offer courses in the high schools rather than having students physically attend the college.

(5.) Discussion of the Recommendation

Throughout this report, the Committee urges that schools be restructured to meet children's unique needs. It is difficult to

match children and programs in this way under a strict geographic assignment to schools.

The Committee believes that over the next decade the District should support phased implementation of a plan that leads to the following outcomes:

- Every school, or virtually every school, within the District will become a school of distinction.
- Every school—faculty and administrators—will be given the time and help to develop distinctive schools, programs, or a common mission. Sometimes the District will provide schools with a menu of choices (e.g., Montessori, traditional, mathematics/science, health fields, engineering, etc.) from which to choose. Sometimes the decision will be exclusively school based and may be a part of the school-based management recommendation.
- The District will establish a common set of goals and curriculum guidelines, but individual schools, working collegially, will be given latitude to determine the particulars of content and how to achieve the common District goals.
- Parents will have equal access to reliable information about the choices being offered and what they mean, and there will be a special effort to ensure that low-income parents are well informed.
- Parents and students will apply to schools, listing their first three choices, and the District will endeavor to honor those choices, subject to other criteria that may be appropriate.
- Siblings will be placed in the same school if parents so desire.
- The administration and the teachers' union will develop procedures to enable teachers to choose the type of school program in which and philosophy under which they wish to practice, while ensuring that no school is deprived of critical faculty.
- Parental involvement will not end with choosing a school.

To achieve this long-term goal described above, the Committee suggests the following plan. First, the school system needs to upgrade the quality so that there is substantially less variation from one school to the next in terms of providing children with the skills they need either for further study or for participating in the workforce.

Second, the school system should begin the process of creating a system of distinctive schools in the District by building on current successful schools and, at the same time, engaging education experts, universities, and the business community to support additional, unique schools built around curricular, thematic, and other strategies.

There have been enough examples of unique schools so that, when properly designed, each school, regardless of its theme, should have an academically diverse student body. For example, one Houston high school with an engineering focus admits an academically diverse student body and successfully qualifies its students, on the one hand, for admission to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and, on the other, for good jobs after high school graduation.

Given the danger that a distinctive school system can result in schools that are identifiable by students' ability levels or social and economic backgrounds, the system must take measures to organize these distinctive schools to produce an academically diverse student body in each. Taking such measures is the best means of ensuring success while guaranteeing that each school comes up to the educational and other standards necessary to pursue its mission.

These distinctive schools must be developed on a school-by-school basis. The sys-

tem would have to ensure that schools have the autonomy, assistance, and resources necessary both to meet the goal of offering a basic education and to meet their thematic objectives. The system would also have to use a variety of mechanisms such as alternative certification to hire individuals with particular skills and backgrounds to staff components of these schools.

The Committee has engaged several universities in a discussion of this concept and believes that they are willing to provide support.

Other organizations and individuals have expressed similar desires to help support unique schools.

The Committee recognizes that this effort will require additional resources. It further recognizes that it is important to structure the plan so that real successes can occur. That is, the structure must be built over an extended period of time on a school-by-school basis. The Committee further believes that when these schools are in place and fully functioning, the option of districtwide choice can be considered by the Board of Education.

Finally, the Committee would catalogue these activities and make available to students and parents throughout the system the information on unique programs and school identities that exist at the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels throughout the District today. Such information should be updated routinely as programs are implemented.

A Summary of the Recommendation

4. The District of Columbia public schools should improve the quality and diversity of school offerings by: identifying model programs and practices within the school system and making that information available to all schools; establishing a series of special schools, located throughout the city, each of which would be based upon its own unique curriculum or educational approach, with a focus at the junior and senior high levels; and ultimately, over the long-term, providing greater choice to parents and students in the selection of programs and schools.

III. TEACHERS: THE HEART OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

The Committee moves from a discussion of what it would like our schools to be to a consideration of those who work in them. The Committee starts with a fundamental belief—that the quality of the people who work in our schools and their level of commitment will determine how successful our schools are. They are the backbone of the school system. Hence, it is essential that the school system attract and retain a high-quality work force of teachers and administrators.

Teachers in the District of Columbia face serious challenges. They must deal with a very diverse student population, and with problems that most professionals can hardly imagine. They are often left to fend for themselves, without the assistance of or interaction with colleagues that are typical of other work places. The District's teachers endure working conditions that are substandard, and that most other professionals would not tolerate. Supplies are lacking, building security is often a problem, and teachers receive minimal assistance and respect. Teachers are, in the Committee's judgment, the unsung heroes of the school system.

In the Committee's review of the teaching profession, it has reached a basic conclusion. In the future, the District will have major problems in attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce. District teachers' salaries lag significantly behind teachers' salaries in the surrounding jurisdictions. There are few financial or other incentives for high-quality performance. Working conditions are substandard, and supporting staff and materials are inadequate. Finally, the applicant teacher pool is not large enough to enable the District to be highly selective.

A. TOWARD A PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE

(1.) Introduction

The basic profile of the teaching workforce in the District of Columbia is not unlike that of other large urban school systems. Teachers in the District are a highly educated and experienced group. The majority hold a master's or other advanced degree; almost half of today's teachers will become eligible for retirement by the end of the century. About 90 percent of the teaching work force is Black and 80 percent female.

Although detailed data concerning the educational achievement levels of D.C. teachers were unavailable, the Committee believes the data are comparable with national data that show that individuals who express an intent to teach, as a group, tend to perform below their peers in other fields on a variety of standardized achievement and aptitude tests.

The Committee believes that a comprehensive package that will encourage highly motivated, bright people to enter the teaching profession and work in the District of Columbia is needed and must be created. In particular, given the competition for minority teachers within the region and across the country, the Committee believes that the District must offer a very attractive package to be competitive.

(2.) What Teachers Think About Working in D.C. Schools

The Committee surveyed more than 1,200 teachers and 47 administrators (in schools, rather than in the central office) in the District of Columbia, and the results rein-

forced what it heard at town meetings. The Committee found that:

1. Physical conditions are substandard because of a serious lack of repairs and preventive maintenance.

- Almost 75 percent of the teachers and more than 50 percent of the administrators reported persistent problems with heating and cooling.
- Almost 100 percent of the administrators and more than 50 percent of the teachers said that repairs take too long and sometimes are never made or are poorly done.

2. Security is a major concern.

- Security was rated inadequate by more than one-third of the workforce in approximately 75 percent of the schools.

3. The basic resources needed to teach—materials and books—are inadequate.

- Of those surveyed, 68 percent of the teachers reported inadequate supplies, 68 percent inadequate copy machines, 56 percent too few telephones, 54 percent scarce instructional materials, and more than 40 percent inadequate audio-visual equipment and computers.

4. Most teachers feel relatively powerless with regard to important decisions affecting their work.

- Fifty percent or more said they had little or no influence over assigning students to classes, determining the content of the curricula, allocating discretionary resources, assigning aides to teachers, hiring and evaluating staff, and evaluating aides.

5. Teachers perceive that they are receiving little help or evaluation.

- Two-thirds of the teachers said that they were formally observed only once a semester, or less.
- One-half of the teachers reported one informal observation, or less per semester.
- Most teachers report assistance only in the form of "advice."

6. Teachers are struggling to bridge the social and cultural gaps between themselves and students.

- About one-half of the teachers said that students did not work hard or behave appropriately.

These findings are not surprising. But they do point out that some very important reforms—better, secure facilities; adequate materials and support personnel; and greater autonomy at the classroom level and participation in school building decisions—can go a long way to improve morale and enable teachers to carry out their responsibilities more effectively.

(3.) Overall Teacher Quality

The Committee believes that most teachers in the District of Columbia are competent and hard-working individuals. However, too frequently their efforts are overshadowed by a relatively small number of classroom teachers who are not performing.

When the Committee visited schools, it asked principals and other teachers what percentage of their teaching workforce they thought were incompetent. The answers were remarkably consistent—somewhere between 10 percent and 20 percent.

Although this is not unexpected, the implications for students, and their futures,

are significant. Children with special needs need highly motivated and competent teachers, not the reverse.

In the Committee's visits to other school systems, it asked officials about the quality of the teaching workforce. These officials reported similar findings—that a minority, albeit a significant minority, was incompetent.

(4.) The Applicant Pool

The Committee reviewed the broad issue of recruitment and retention to determine where to focus efforts to improve the quality of the workforce.

The Committee found that turnover of D.C. teachers is comparable with that of other school districts in the area and nationwide (see Table III-1). At the current level of 5 percent to 7 percent turnover, the District of Columbia Public Schools will need to hire about 400 to 500 new teachers per year. Although there is some evidence that many current teachers are thinking about resigning and many older teachers will retire in the near future, the Committee does not believe that the District of Columbia faces a unique problem with having to locate unusually large numbers of teachers to work in its schools. The Committee recognizes, however, that certain nationwide trends may create an overall shortage in the supply of high-quality teachers.

Table III-2
Approximate ratio of applicants to hires in three local jurisdictions

District	Ratio*
Montgomery County, MD.	13 : 1
Prince George's County, MD.	7 : 1
District of Columbia	2 : 1 to 4 : 1*

* Unable to verify a precise number for the applicant pool based on existing District Records.

The real problem is recruiting. The current applicant pool is not large enough to enable the District to be highly selective. The District has many fewer applicants for teaching jobs than do any of the surrounding suburbs (see Table III-2).

Improving recruiting involves addressing the working conditions and compensation issues that are discussed below and elsewhere in the report. But there are additional steps that the school system is considering that are also important. Specifically, the Committee recommends the implementation of a broad recruitment strategy, including calling for assistance from the Washington business community, to increase the numbers of applicants seeking jobs in the D.C. school system. Prince George's County, MD, was able to increase its applicant pool through a similar program, and the Committee believes that businesses are able to assist in specific projects such as these.

Table III-1.
Teacher Turnover in Select Districts
Average Percentage 1987-1988

Local		Non-Local	
D.C.	5.6	Atlanta	6.0
Alexandria	5.5	Pittsburgh	4.0
Arlington	5.0	Memphis	6.0
Fairfax	5.2	Miami	5.5
Montgomery	5.5	Rochester	5.0
Prince George's	5.0	San Diego	3.0

B. COMPENSATION, CAREER LADDERS, AND INCENTIVE PAY

(1.) Background

A key element in any effort to attract, develop, and retain a high-quality workforce must be the creation of a compensation package that is attractive, competitive, and rewards performance. The current compensation package in the District of Columbia fails to meet these criteria.

In general, the District of Columbia has not kept pace with a national trend to upgrade salaries for teachers as part of a broad strategy to improve education.

The recent contract for the District's teachers includes an across-the-board increase of 7 percent for the 1989-1990 school year. The Committee is concerned, however, that across-the-board increases, without the introduction of an appropriate career ladder and incentive pay opportunities, will not achieve the objective of recruiting and retaining a high-quality workforce.

Figures III-1 and III-2 compare current teacher salaries in the District of Columbia with teacher salaries in the surrounding jurisdictions and other urban school districts. The Committee reviewed benefits as well and found them to be comparable. Hence, the focus is on basic salary.

As shown in Figure III-1, the starting salary for D.C. teachers is the lowest of the major school systems in the Washington area. In comparison with the average starting teacher's salary in the five districts bordering the District, the D.C. starting salary is 7 percent lower. The maximum D.C. teacher salary offered is also below levels available in other local districts. In comparison with the average of the five bordering districts, the D.C. maximum teacher salary is 8 percent lower.

Furthermore, recent teacher salary growth in the District has lagged behind other districts in the area. From 1985 through 1988, D.C. teacher salaries increased by 7.9 percent, compared with 18.8 percent in Virginia and 15.4 percent in Maryland.

Figure III-2 shows the comparison between minimum and maximum D.C. teacher salaries and those in eight major urban school systems. The salary amounts in Figure III-2 have been adjusted to account for variations in cost of living and in length of the contract year. The amounts shown are in terms of Washington metropolitan area living costs and the 10-month contract year of D.C. public school teachers.

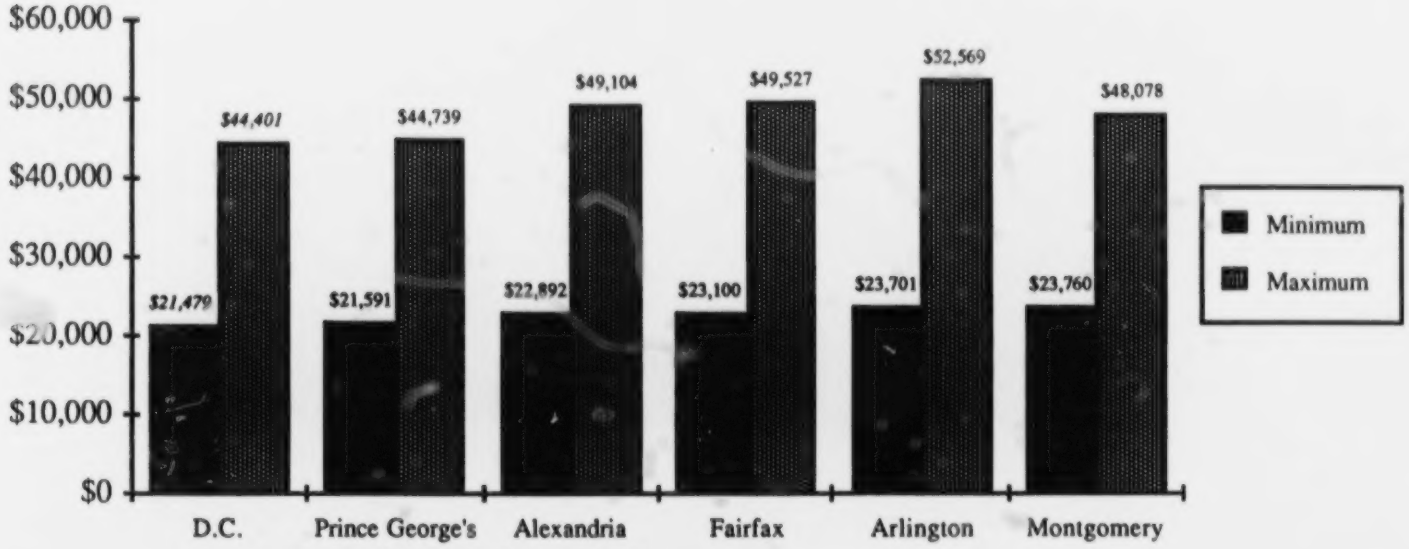
Figure III-3 shows a comparison between the earnings of D.C. teachers and college-educated workers in non-teaching occupations. The average D.C. teacher salary is 19 percent less than the estimated average salary of college-educated workers in other occupations in the District and the surrounding states. This comparison is between the 10-month D.C. teacher's contract and 12-month employment in other occupations. When compared on a 10-month basis, the difference is 3.2 percent.

In addition to the fact that the current compensation package for teaching in the District of Columbia is not competitive with those of surrounding jurisdictions, the D.C. public schools do not now have an incentive pay program. The Committee believes this to be essential to strengthening the workforce.

(2.) Alternative Pay Concepts in Other Districts

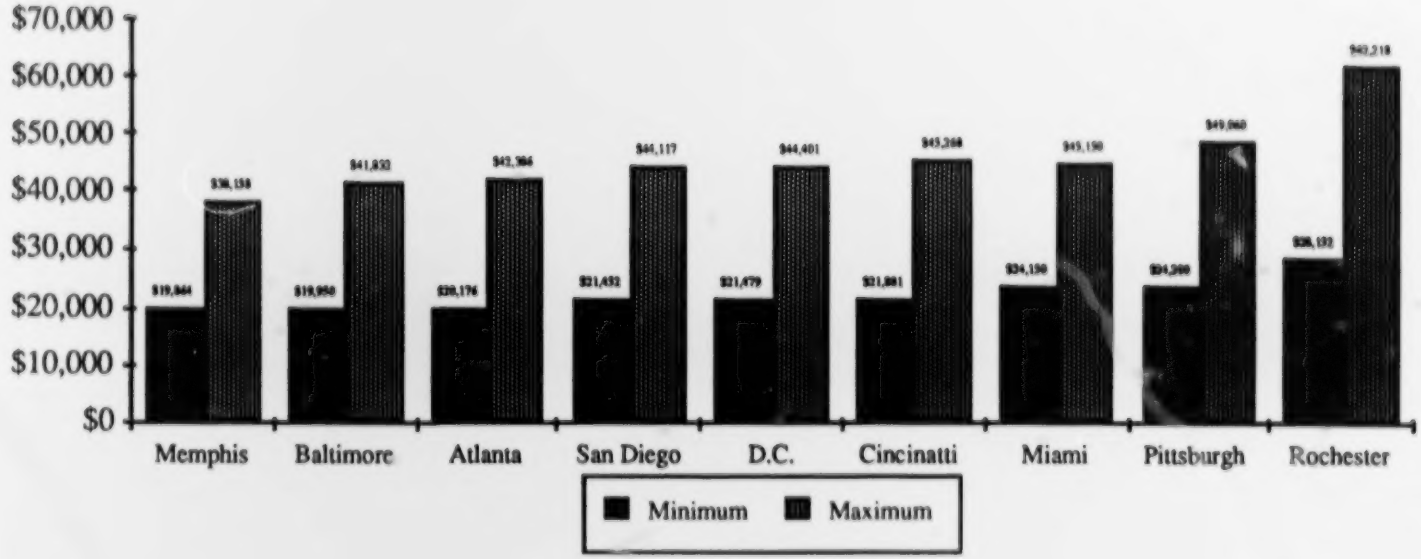
The Committee reviewed a number of incentive pay programs. These reviews convinced the Committee that a number of public school systems are applying business

FIGURE III-1
ANNUAL TEACHER SALARIES
Minimum and Maximum
D.C. Versus Suburban Juristictions



Source: Washington Metropolitan Area
Boards of Education Association.

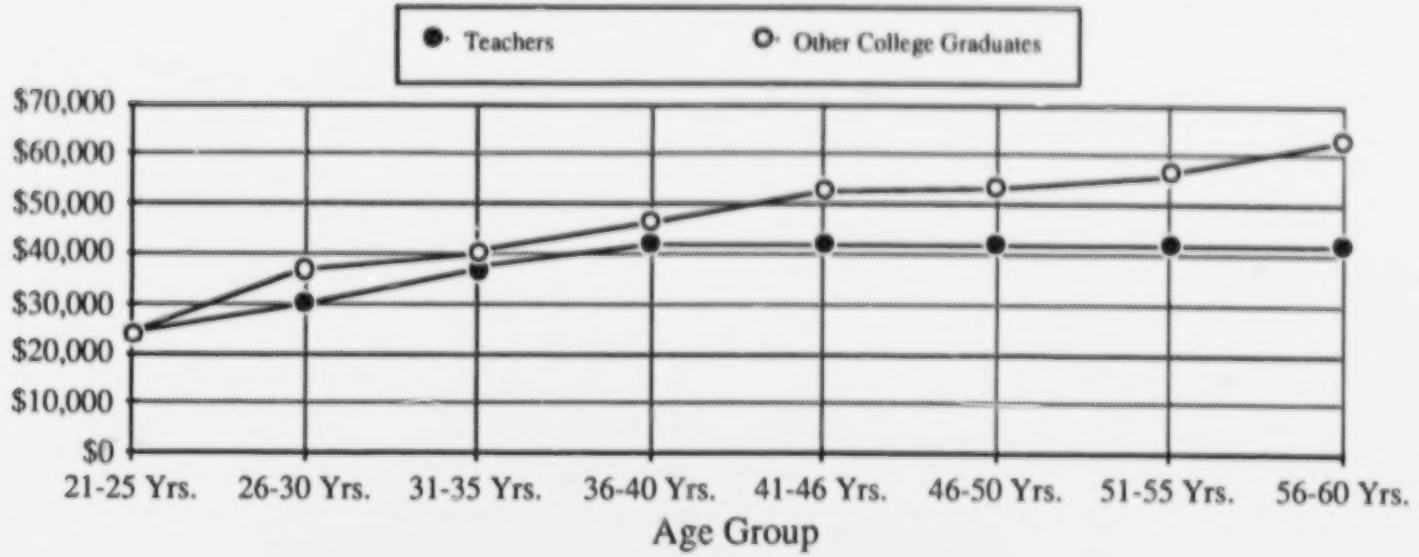
FIGURE III-2
ANNUAL TEACHER SALARIES*
Minimum and Maximum
D.C. Versus Eight Urban Systems



* Adjusted for cost of living.

Source: Survey of Select Cities.

FIGURE III-3
COMPARISON OF ESTIMATED EARNINGS BY AGE COHORT
D.C. Teachers and Other College Graduates in
Virginia, Maryland, and D.C.



Source: D.C. Public Schools and U.S. Bureau of Census, "Survey of Income and Employment."

principles to the compensation of employees in the school system.

The Rochester School System, in cooperation with the local teachers' union, has developed a comprehensive career ladder/professional development program that is attracting much attention nationwide. The Rochester "Career in Teaching Plan" provides for four stages of a teacher's development: intern, resident, professional, and lead teacher.

The Miami/Dade County School System has adopted a school-based merit pay plan, career ladders, and a number of other compensation reforms. Some background concerning the school-based merit pay plan: in 1984 the Florida legislature passed an innovative "merit school" bill designed to provide incentives for entire school staffs who work toward improved student achievement. The 1984 legislation provided $19.5 million for one year, to be divided among school districts in Florida that voluntarily developed a plan for rewarding the most improved schools in their district. Thirty-three of 67 school districts proposed plans; 31 were approved.

As part of that effort, the Dade County plan was developed. It is a unique districtwide program developed jointly by the school district and the teacher's union. To participate, two-thirds of the faculty and staff of a school must agree.

The San Diego Unified School District has adopted a mentor/career ladder plan based on the Rochester model. All new teachers, and experienced teachers with poor evaluations, are assigned mentors to work with them to improve teaching methods. The mentor program includes frequent conferences, demonstrations, and workshops. Mentors receive a supplement of $4,000 per year. As in Rochester, promotion to the mentor/lead teacher level is limited and competitive.

The Fairfax County School District is attempting to implement a comprehensive merit pay system tied to the performance ratings of individual teachers. This system is characterized by introduction of a new performance rating system that differentiates rewards according to performance. Teachers who are not performing at an appropriate level are provided assistance, but if they fail to improve, they are removed from the classroom. Outstanding teachers receive the greatest financial rewards.

(3.) Recommendations With Respect to Compensation

(a.) Career ladders

The Committee recommends the adoption of a formal career ladder program for teachers in the District of Columbia. Although the detailed design of the career ladder program should be developed by all affected parties, the Committee proposes consideration of the following system.

The proposed career ladder would have five ranks, although the first three ranks exist for the purpose of developing a tenured teacher, and not because of any specific delineation of differentiated responsibilities. Promotion from one rank to another would be based on the decisions of promotion boards, at the school level, composed of higher ranked teachers, administrators, and parents.

The first rank, Instructor, is the entry rank for teachers with no prior experience. It is similar to, and would be integrated with the system's existing intern program. In general, the instructor must teach under the supervision of a mentor teacher and must undergo systematic evaluations throughout the year. At the end of the first year, there are three options in the career ladder: promotion to Teacher I, a second year as an instructor, or termination.

The second rank, Teacher I, would be filled by fully autonomous independent teachers who did not have tenure. Contracts

would be for two-year terms and would be renewed only on the basis of satisfactory teacher evaluations. A person could remain in this rank no more than four years. Failure to attain promotion to Teacher II within six years would result in a non-renewal of the contract. Duties of the teachers in this rank would include all regular classroom teaching assignments, school committee assignments, and extracurricular assignments.

The third rank, Teacher II, would be for teachers with tenure. Minimum qualifications for this rank would be successful completion of at least two years at the Teacher I level with satisfactory evaluations, graduate credit for at least 15 hours of courses in relevant fields, and successful demonstration of teaching effectiveness as judged by Master Teachers. Appointment at this rank would be on a continuing contract.

The fourth rank, Master Teacher, would be for tenured teachers who were both outstanding and also willing and able to take on additional assignments leading to the Instructional Leader rank. Requirements for the Master Teacher rank would be at least four years of experience in the Teacher II rank with outstanding evaluations, a master's degree, evidence of professional development activity, and successful demonstration of teaching effectiveness to a panel of Master Teachers. Duties of teachers in this category would focus primarily on classroom teaching but would include duties that may provide training and experience leading to the Instructional Leader rank. Such additional duties could include chairing school building committees, serving on promotion boards, serving as mentor teachers, and serving as group leaders in staff development activities. This rank is intended as recognition of a person's full development as an effective teacher and as a training point for teachers who are moving toward the instructional leader rank.

The Committee believes that, based on the staffing pattern described above and the needs of the school system, no more than 15 percent of the teaching force, in total, will be at the rank of Master Teacher.

The fifth rank, Instructional Leader, would be reserved for a few excellent teachers, and would comprise about 10 percent of the teaching workforce. The requirement would be three years of successful service at the Master Teacher level. In addition to normal teaching duties, Instructional Leaders would function as "teacher executives," with responsibilities for overseeing aides and other support personnel, serving on and chairing promotion boards, serving as department chairs, leading curriculum development efforts, developing and leading in-service training programs, and serving on evaluation panels.

The Committee recommends improvements to the existing compensation schedule that are based on this revised career ladder. Specifically, the Committee is proposing:

1. Increases at the entry level to exceed slightly entry pay in the surrounding jurisdictions and to improve the quality of the applicant pool:

- The Committee envisions salary increases at the entry level of approximately 9 percent above levels established for the current school year.
- Such a level would exceed the amounts being offered at the entry level in the surrounding jurisdictions, taking into account the working conditions and challenges that teachers face in the District.

2. Significant salary growth throughout the ladder to reward performance over an extended career in teaching by graduation to the senior ranks of the career ladder:

- Salaries for high achievers in the workforce would exceed existing salary ceilings.

3. The option of 12-month contracts in order to deliver a year-round program of schooling in the District and to make teaching a truly full-time profession:

- When the 12-month option is added, compensation levels greatly exceed opportunities for most teachers in surrounding jurisdictions.
- The Committee believes that the 12-month option should involve a pay increase of approximately 12 percent.

4. More consistent and higher compensation for conducting various extracurricular and remedial activities after school.

The 12-month contract option corresponds with the recommendation of the Committee to expand the school year. There is a need to match students' participation in the summer program with an appropriate number of school personnel. The Committee further expects that although teachers will help develop and implement extracurricular and other non-graded activities, as well as remediation, during the morning of a summer school program, afternoons will be available for in-service training and other program development activities.

With respect to compensation for extracurricular activities beyond the regular school day, the Committee is not proposing a specific salary structure but recognizes the need for enhanced remuneration. The costs of the recommendation are included under the proposal to expand the school day.

Implementation of these and other recommendations throughout the report depend heavily upon an agreement between officials of the school system and the teachers' union. The Committee has identified a number of areas where, it believes, reforms and compromises are necessary among all parties if significant change is to occur. The Committee is committed to providing all parties its analyses concerning changes that are necessary for reform. The Committee believes that these changes are essential if true improvements are to occur.

(b.) School-based incentive pay plan

The Committee believes that effective educational reform in the District of Columbia must occur at the school building level, and thus it supports financial and other incentives that will promote reform at that level.

Specifically, the Committee recommends the implementation of a school-based incentive pay plan patterned after the one in Miami/Dade County. Under this plan, individual schools would volunteer to participate and would submit to the Superintendent of Schools a brief plan with specific objectives. These objectives must be specific and measurable, including items such as improvements in attendance, improvements in test scores, and reductions in dropout rates. A committee created by the superintendent would review each plan to ensure that the plan is comprehensive and that the goals are reasonable and consistent with high expectations for the performance of all children. If a school exceeds all goals set forth in the plan, every employee in that particular school would receive a bonus. The Committee notes that careful attention must be given to developing the submission and evaluation process in order to ensure fairness, equity, and the accomplishment of the program's objectives.

The Committee believes that between $4 million and $6 million should be set aside annually for this incentive pay program.

(c.) Incentives for hard-to-fill positions

The Committee notes that the limited applicant pool creates particular hardships in several specific fields. Hence, the Committee recommends incentives of approximately $2,000 in those areas and

subjects where it is difficult to attract highly qualified teachers. Individuals would start on a higher rung of the career ladder in these positions, although over time their salaries would equal salaries available to their peers. The school system needs to develop a definitive list of these positions based on an internal review of planned requirements. The Committee recommends that the following positions be included for the next several years: bilingual education teachers; mathematics and certain science teachers at the senior high school level; and special education teachers.

Summary of the Recommendation

12. The District of Columbia public schools should adopt a revised compensation and promotion package for teachers that will enable the District to recruit and retain a quality workforce and be competitive with surrounding jurisdictions by adopting:

- Career ladders, which will differentiate staffing patterns to enable the most capable to assume additional roles and responsibilities that will help upgrade the overall quality of the workforce;
- Incentive pay on a schoolwide basis, where all employees in a school will receive bonuses when the school exceeds its objectives;
- Greater options for 12-month contracts to staff a full-scale summer program;
- Greater remuneration for extracurricula activities to support an effective after-school program; and
- Pay differentials for certain difficult to fill positions: math and science at the secondary level, bilingual education, and special education.

C. NEW CRITERIA FOR TEACHING IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

(1) A Stronger Entry-Level Requirement

The Committee recognizes the positive actions taken by the Board of Education to strengthen standards for teaching in the District. On October 19, 1988, the Board of Education voted to require teaching candidates to pass tests in order to be hired. Specifically, teachers will be required to pass the communication section of the standardized National Teachers Examination, as well as local examinations based on the competency-based curriculum.

Although the Committee fully supports the direction taken by the Board of Education, it does not believe, over the long term, that the standards for teaching in the District should differ from those adopted by the majority of states around the country. The District is in a highly competitive market and competes directly with five major suburban school districts, all of whom are aggressively seeking qualified minority candidates. Therefore, the Committee does not believe that applicants to teach in the District should be subject to special and unique requirements, such as locally derived examinations related to the competency-based curriculum, the effect of which is to discourage applicants from seeking jobs in the District.

The Committee also recognizes that there are severe limitations to existing examinations, particularly with respect to their ability to predict successful performance as a teacher. The Committee therefore suggests a reasoned, well-thought-out revision to existing Board policy.

Overall, the Committee recommends that the Board of Education adopt the entire

National Teachers Examination as the mechanism for selecting teachers in the District. This examination is under revision, and the Committee recommends that the Board consider adoption of the full examination, as revised.

(2) An Alternative Certification System

Following review of a number of alternative certification systems now being implemented in various States and school districts, the Committee is convinced that alternative certification offers a significant opportunity to enhance the overall quality of the workforce.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends adoption of a formal alternative certification system in the District of Columbia patterned after the system being implemented in New Jersey. This system would have the following major components:

- Applicants would be required to possess a bachelor's degree and evidence of competence in a particular field.
- An individual could enter on any point of the career ladder (as an Instructor, or Teacher I or II) on a probationary basis, and would be assigned to a professional teacher at a senior level who would provide assistance.
- Based upon the individual's background and experience, the individual would be required to take a series of courses and training activities that would lead to alternative certification for the District of Columbia public schools. In addition, the individual must pass any examination being given to all entrants.
- The focus of the program would be on attracting individuals with experience, individuals with degrees in certain areas where postions are hard to fill but without teaching certification, and individuals with particular backgrounds that are essential to the success of schools operating under the school-based management program.

(3) A Personnel System that Addresses Non-Performers

Everyone the Committee spoke with—teachers, principals, and central office administrators—agrees that the current evaluation system does not function properly. Indeed, both principals and teachers report on the survey that there are too few visits for evaluation, and assistance, to be effective.

In the District of Columbia, as in most other school systems around the country, separations for non-performance are simply not occurring at appropriate rates, given the identified problems with the performance of the workforce.

Accordingly, after reviewing a number of performance evaluation systems, including those in Toledo, OH, Cincinnati, OH, Dade County, FL, and Rochester, NY, the Committee recommends revision of the system currently in place within the District of Columbia. The revised system should be jointly developed and administered by management and union personnel, and would:

1. Be tied formally into the proposed career ladder structure.

2. Involve teams of instructional leaders and administrators who would evaluate performance at all levels of the career ladder.

3. Require formal intervention when performance is not satisfactory:

- Assistance would be provided for a specified period, such as: for Instructor, after year one for a period not to exceed

one year; for Teacher I, after year one for a period not to exceed two years; and for Teacher II, after year one for a period not to exceed three years. Unsatisfactory performance at the upper levels of the career ladder would result in a reassignment to the Teacher II category.

- ❑ Such intervention could be appealed, but any appeal must be resolved by an independent party within a two-month period.

4. Recognize that the goal of the intervention is to bring the teacher to a satisfactory level of performance.

5. Require termination if performance does not improve.

The Committee has not attempted to set forth all components of this evaluation structure, and believes that the new structure must be a product of negotiations between the school system and the teachers' union. The Committee takes the position, however, that no movement toward a comprehensive compensation package, including the career ladder, should occur without corresponding changes in the evaluation structure.

(4) Neither a Residency Requirement nor a Preference System

One of the issues that affects the school system's ability to attract teachers to the District of Columbia is the residency requirement. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding recent changes to this requirement, any preference scheme will hamper the school system's ability to attract highly qualified individuals to teach in the District, and to retain good teachers once hired.

As background, the District of Columbia has had a residency requirement for the city's employees for the past decade. The D.C. government's residency requirement stated that all city employees hired after January 1, 1980, had to become residents of the District within 180 days of appointment or forfeit their jobs. D.C. residence had to be maintained for the duration of the employment. The law explicitly applied to all public school teachers and other school employees.

In appropriating the City's funds for fiscal year 1989, Congress directed that the District government replace the residency requirement with a preference system, to be adopted by May 1, 1989, and implemented by September 30, 1989, and forbade the dismissal of any employees currently facing adverse action for non-compliance, effective immediately.

The Residency Preference Amendment Act of 1988 was passed by the City Council, and signed by the Mayor on January 6, 1989. It took effect upon its publication in the D.C. Register, March 31, 1989. That legislation provides that "an applicant for District government employment in the Educational Service who is a bona fide resident of the District at the time of application shall be given a hiring preference over a non-resident applicant." If hired, the employee must "agree in writing to maintain bona fide District residency for a period of five consecutive years from the effective date of hire," or forfeit his or her position.

As of the writing of this report, regulations implementing the preference system for D.C. public school employees are still being drafted by the school administration and will become final only after Board of Education action and a City Council review period. Nevertheless, as of March 31, 1989, the residency requirement was repealed and the preference system adopted. The school

system has taken the position that any teacher hired before March 16, 1989, must maintain District residence for at least five years or be subject to dismissal.

The Committee understands the rationale for the residency requirement but believes that it has seriously diminished the applicant pool for teaching jobs in the D.C. public schools, at a time when the school system is hiring significant numbers of teachers, when there are shortages of teachers in many specialties, and when neighboring districts offer better salaries and working conditions. The Committee fears, moreover, that forcing District teachers to maintain residence within the city will encourage good teachers to join suburban school systems to get out from under the residency requirement.

The evidence of the effect of the residency requirement on recruiting is persuasive. A 1987 survey of teacher interns by the Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights showed that 73 percent reported that they had found it difficult to find housing in the District that was both affordable and acceptable. In that same survey, school system recruiters and administrators at teachers' colleges in surrounding jurisdictions cited examples of excellent minority teacher candidates giving the D.C. residency requirement as the major reason for declining to seek positions in the District schools. Moreover, projections from the 1980 Census indicate that for the first time in decades, the majority of the Black population in this region now resides outside the District of Columbia. Officials in neighboring school districts commented to Lawyers' Committee staff that they intend to continue to recruit good minority teachers from D.C. schools and they expressed amazement that the District schools would accept such a serious limitation on their ability to compete for the best possible teachers in the metropolitan area.

Implementation of a preference system is likely to have a similar negative effect on recruitment. The Committee believes that any preference system will require a fairly lengthy and difficult hiring procedure to ensure that preference is applied and implemented fairly and with appropriate due process. A qualified minority teacher candidate, when given a choice of applying to a number of public school systems, will view the preference system as a further disincentive to seeking employment in the District. Further, the preference system is likely to result in delays in offering employment, which will further disadvantage the city vis-a-vis the suburban school districts.

In summary, the Committee believes that the preference system should not apply to persons seeking teaching or principal jobs in the District of Columbia.

A Summary of the Recommendations

13. As one of the conditions for overall reform, and as a precondition for an enhanced compensation package, the school system should seek to strengthen its workforce by:

- Mandating use of the entire National Teacher's Exam, as revised, for entry-level personnel.
- Adopting an alternative certification program whereby individuals possessing skills and knowledge in particular areas, but not holding a teaching certificate, will be able to teach in schools under certain conditions.
- Revising its performance evaluation system to reward superior teachers and to remove from the classroom those teachers who cannot or will not perform satisfactorily even after they have been given appropriate in-service training and assistance. The evaluation system should involve teachers reviewing the performance of fellow teachers.

- Involving teachers more directly in the overall management of schools.

14. The District of Columbia public school system competes directly for qualified teachers, especially minority teachers, with five major suburban jurisdictions. The school system should strengthen its recruitment procedures to increase the applicant pool, and it should eliminate the residency requirement, or preference system, which serves as a barrier to working in the D.C. public schools and puts the city at a competitive disadvantage vis-a-vis the suburban jurisdictions.

D. IN-SERVICE TRAINING NEEDS AND INSTRUCTION

Most of the teachers who will teach the current generation, and the next generation, of students are in the schools today. Therefore, any program designed to upgrade the quality of teaching and increase teachers' skills will depend on implementation of a strong in-service training program.

In general, most successful private sector companies spend greater resources on the training of key personnel than do their counterparts in the public sector. Further, such training is typically more focused and directed toward accomplishment of the overall goals of the organization.

The Committee found training in the District of Columbia public schools to be limited, as it is in many other public sector organizations.

Furthermore, in a number of the other school systems the Committee visited, it found staff development and training activities to be better integrated with overall goals than in the District.

As the school system considers implementation of the numerous recommendations in this report, it should view staff development as the key to improving instruction and what goes on inside classrooms. Training must involve both subject matter and pedagogy.

A comprehensive plan for staff development must be implemented that promotes and supports excellence in teaching and learning at the local school level, as well as systemwide.

This plan would empower teachers, principals, and other school staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach all students in our technologically advanced society. If teachers are to assume greater responsibility for developing and managing the instructional program, they must be trained in decision-making and in

working collaboratively with administrators, paraprofessionals, parents, university faculty, and community leaders. Teachers must be able to create different learning environments in mini-schools that will match student needs. And the more experienced, more able teachers must be trained to help novice teachers and others who need help to perfect their skills.

Staff development programs in areas where successful school reform is taking place are characterized by the following:

1. Staff development is viewed as desirable and even prestigious for all school personnel.

2. All staff development is directly connected to student learning.

3. Substantial resources have been allotted to and invested in staff development activities.

4. The emphasis in on ways to engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving.

5. In-service training courses are designed for teachers and other personnel at every stage of their development from the induction of new teachers to the training of master teachers.

6. The in-service training courses provide the opportunity to learn theory that is grounded in empirical research, to have techniques demonstrated, to practice new skills, and to receive feedback and coaching in the classroom as well as at the staff development site.

The Committee is aware that over the years the D.C. Public School System has conducted a variety of staff development activities that included demonstration schools, teacher centers, mentors for beginning teachers, teacher institutes, and peer coaching. The Committee proposes that these efforts be strengthened and better coordinated to meet the current needs for school improvement and reform. Specifically, the Committee proposes:

1. The District of Columbia public schools should institute a comprehensive staff development system that is responsive to systemwide goals and objectives, to local school building needs for improvement and restructuring, and to individuals' needs to improve and expand their knowledge, skills, and competencies.

2. Greater responsibility for staff development and in-service training should be shifted to the schools, with the district offices providing support and resources. Principals and school faculties should be involved in developing, implementing, and monitoring staff development programs.

3. The central office should set criteria and standards for all staff development programs.

4. The central office should design an overall training plan that includes intensive summer institutes and workshops for teachers.

5. Staff development activities should be closely linked to the requirements for ascending the career ladder. Incremental salary increases for completing course work should be abandoned; criteria should be degrees earned, teaching performance, and skills and leadership ability.

In particular, the school system, in equal collaboration with local schools, should mount and support a sustained, coherent program of school-based staff development designed to help teachers employ a repertoire of teaching strategies designed to motivate children and get them seriously involved in school work. Such a program would involve:

1. Training for principals in the identification of skilled teachers within their own schools;

2. Allocation of resources to relieve skilled

teachers so they can work with other teachers within their own schools;

3. Provision of expert assistance to assist teacher-trainers in local schools; and

4. Systemwide designation of demonstration schools where excellent instruction can be observed and practiced.

The resources to implement these suggestions are contained in Chapter VI, not as a separate item, but in conjunction with the recommendations regarding the curricula and schools of distinction.

Summary of the Recommendation

15. The in-service training program within the District should be revised by:

- Developing a comprehensive training plan and program at the central level that will facilitate overall reform, consistent with goals set by the Board of Education; is coordinated with curriculum and testing; and reflects the best practices of teaching children with the needs evidenced in the District of Columbia,
- Placing greater responsibility for staff development at the school building level; and
- Setting standards for appropriate training activities.

In particular, the school system—in partnership with individual schools—should mount and support a sustained, coherent, program of school-based staff development designed to help teachers employ a repertoire of teaching strategies designed to motivate and get students seriously involved in school work. Such a program should involve:

- Training for principals in the identification of skilled teachers in their own schools;
- Allocation of resources to relieve skilled teachers so they can work with other teachers within their own schools;
- Provision of expert assistance to assist teacher-trainers in local schools; and
- Systemwide designation of demonstration schools where excellent instruction can be observed and practiced.

IV. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A REDIRECTION

A. SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

(1.) Introduction

The Committee believes that teachers and principals in the District of Columbia must be given greater autonomy to run schools, freed from a system that, on the one hand, often forces them to plead and lobby for equipment and supplies while, on the other hand, it requires them to respond to numerous edicts and directives from the central office.

If significant change is to take place, it must occur at the school level; teachers, principals, and parents should be given the freedom and encouragement to become innovative and to discover new ways to meet the individual needs of their students.

The role of the central office should be to support change; the central office must increasingly view itself as an organization to serve the needs of individual schools.

With greater autonomy must come greater accountability. The outcomes of schooling—by district, individual school, and individual student—must be systematically collected and made available to the public. And the individual school must become the locus of accountability within the school system. When a school is not performing, the Superintendent of Schools must take appropriate action.

(2.) What Is School-Based Management?

On the basis of meetings with numerous consultants and practitioners from across the country, the Committee concluded that effective schools have much in common: strong leadership, clear goals, strong academic requirements, an orderly setting, parental involvement, high expectations for the performance of students, and some degree of autonomy (whether given or, in effect, assumed and taken). Most important, there is a widespread recognition that the school, not an individual classroom or an entire district, is the proper focus for improving learning.

Although there is no common definition for school-based management, there is agreement that it involves increased authority at the school site level. The major components of authority include budgeting, curriculum, personnel, educational objectives, training, and maintenance and operations.

Regarding budgeting decisions, the principal must have the authority to allocate the funds allotted to the school. Regarding curriculum decisions, the principal and teachers must have flexibility to choose textbooks and to construct and deliver an educational program within the broad parameters established by the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. Likewise, many of the key personnel decisions (e.g., hiring, evaluating, and rating personnel) should be made at the building level. The school should set schoolwide objectives consistent with the broad goals established for the school system as a whole. Concerning training, the issue is the extent to which principals and the appropriate governance structure at the school level will determine staff development needs and appropriate intervention, and the extent to which such matters will be prescribed systemwide. Finally, concerning maintenance and operations, it will be necessary to determine which items are under the control of the principal and on-site building maintenance personnel and which are the responsibility of the central office.

School-based management involves administrators, staff, teachers, and parents in new relationships and responsibilities.

(3.) The Rationale for School-Based Management

The rationale for school-based management is straightforward. First, and perhaps most important, the Committee believes that school-based management will result in improvements in the overall performance of schools, including student achievement. Under school-based management, accountability for student achievement rests squarely with the individual school. The more that basic decisions affecting students are made at the building level, the greater the likelihood that students will be well served. After all, the people most aware of the diverse problems and needs in a particular school are those working at that level.

Second, with greater authority and responsibility comes greater accountability. Hence, greater authority will increase the involvement and interest of all with a stake in a school—parents, teachers, principal, and students. And the Committee knows that such involvement will benefit the children.

Third, by giving more authority to, and imposing more responsibility upon teachers and principals, school-based management contributes to an overall professionalization of the workforce. The Committee was told by researchers that effective schools have staffs that share a commitment to excellence and that help one another in moving the school in that direction. For example, good teaching is more likely to occur when the teacher is allowed to exercise professional judgment, and not when he or she is simply required to follow detailed curriculum guidelines and instructional methods. Similarly, a principal is more effective when he or she has the authority to function as a manager.

Fourth, greater authority at the school level tends to give rise to more diverse offerings, encourages innovation and responsiveness to community needs, and offers alternatives within the school system. When alternatives exist, a natural outcome will be more choice among parents and students, as well as a healthy degree of competition among schools.

(4.) School-Based Management in Other Districts

The Committee visited a number of school districts that have adopted school-based management. The Dade County Public Schools have more than 80 schools that have been turned over to management teams that include principals, parents, and teachers. Additional schools join the program each year.

In Prince George's County, MD, Superintendent John Murphy has instituted a system that gives considerable management flexibility to certain magnet schools.

In East Harlem, New York, most important decisions are now school-based, the outgrowth of a long-term effort to reform schools.

In general, placing greater authority at the school building level will involve a multi-year, complex undertaking that will require the commitment of the Superintendent of Schools and other education leaders in the community, including the Board of Education and appropriate unions.

(5.) Roles and Responsibilities Under School-Based Management

The Committee found that school-based management has significant implications for the central office and governing bodies involved with education, as well as for school personnel and parents at the building level.

The central office must come to see itself not as a regulator, but as a service

provider. The primary function of the central office must be to ensure that individual schools have what they need to be successful. The central office must possess the expertise to help schools develop competent plans and educational programs; when adequate plans and programs are not developed by a school, the central office must limit the flexibility that would otherwise be permitted that school and offer assistance to the school in overcoming its deficiencies. The central office must coordinate and deliver the training that is essential to enable school personnel to manage the school effectively. The central office must help design the parameters under which school-based management will function; clear operating procedures are essential. For example, in the area of building management, the central office must determine what functions are best performed centrally.

The central office must coordinate the monitoring of the overall performance of each school and the entire school system to ensure that the policies of the Board of Education are being implemented. When a school is not performing satisfactorily, the central office must take appropriate management action. Just as students are issued report cards, the central office should issue report cards showing the performance of individual schools, and that information should be made available to the public.

Under school-based management, the Board of Education must continue to set the goals and standards for the school system under which decentralized schools operate. The Board would establish policies to support overall improvement, identify specific systemwide goals in cooperation with the Superintendent of Schools, establish a climate that supports school-based decision-making, and monitor the performance of the central office and progress toward achieving the District's goals. The Board's members would serve as public advocates for the school improvement effort.

At the school building level, the principal functions as the manager of the school. Typically, the principal is assisted by a governing group comprising teachers, other personnel, and parents. Shared decision-making is typically thought of as an essential element of successful school-based management. There should be flexibility at the building level to structure these arrangements. Ultimately, final responsibility and authority must rest with the principal.

(6) Current Activities in the District of Columbia

As in many other school districts throughout the country, some of the elements of a school-based management system are present in D.C. schools. For example, there is some flexibility in the choice of textbooks, and some discretionary funds are available for purchasing supplies and materials. As part of a broad reorganization of the school system, the Superintendent recently determined that maintenance personnel in schools should report to the principal rather than to the central office.

Our general observation is that most school principals and faculty do not believe they have enough autonomy and authority to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

The Superintendent shares this view, and he has announced his intention to move the District forward in the area of school-based management.

(7) Discussion of the Recommendations

The Committee offers the following recommendations in support of the Superintendent's efforts to implement school-based management in the District of Columbia.

The District of Columbia public schools should adopt a broad policy endorsing

school-based management and set as a long-term goal of greater decentralization of authority and responsibility to all individual schools.

The District of Columbia Public Schools should move toward implementation of this policy by beginning with a number of pilot schools.

(a.) Characteristics of the pilot program

Individual schools and the central office should reach agreement on the nature of the program to be implemented over several years. The components of the program need not be uniform for all pilot schools. For example, one school might have greater authority in the area of curriculum; another might choose to continue an existing approach based on central guidelines. The exact nature of the program should be based on the needs and capacities of individual schools.

Schools participating in the pilot must develop a plan, with appropriate guidance to ensure some uniformity, setting forth the objectives of the school and specifying the improvements necessary to achieve those objectives. The plan must be consistent with the broad goals and policies of the school system as set by the Board of Education. This plan would, of course, constitute the basis for implementation of school-based incentive pay if the school chooses to participate in that program when implemented.

The plan should specify relationships between costs and plans to achieve stated objectives. Once the plan is approved by the central office, there needs to be a joint commitment by the school and the central office to implement the plan. Each plan should identify any impediments to achieving the stated objectives (e.g., legislative requirements within the District of Columbia; contracts with existing unions). The understanding among all parties must be that, where agreement is reached about such impediments, there will be a joint effort to remove the impediments. The nature of the effort will, of course, depend on the particular impediments that are identified. Each plan should address all school-related issues and requirements, including, for example, the need for support from psychologists, counselors, nurses, social workers, and others to address the special needs of children. The Superintendent must review progress in meeting the plan's specified goals on a regular basis. Initially, this review should occur at least semiannually. The exact frequency, in both the short and the long term, of such reviews will depend on the nature of the plan and other relevant factors.

As part of the agreement concerning the plan, the central office must commit resources to assisting schools. For example, the Committee believes that training should be available for principals, teachers, and parents participating in this process. The central office should coordinate and ensure the provision of such training.

In general, each school should have a governance council with participation by the principal, faculty, other school personnel, parents, and other interested support groups. The principal would be primarily responsible for the functioning of the council, but the goal should be to share decisions about the goals and plans of the school among the group. The council would help develop the plan to be submitted to the Superintendent.

The Committee recommends that a broad range of schools participate in this pilot project. There should be a mixture of elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Moreover, the number of participating schools should not be fixed for several years. Rather, the number of participating schools should grow as lessons are learned and experience is gained.

The Committee also recommends that some of the selected schools have a unique

educational program or activity. For example, some of the schools may have a strong parent involvement program; others might offer hands-on science at the elementary level.

The Superintendent should designate an appropriate support unit, separate from other organizations and within his or her immediate office, to assist the pilot projects. All pilot schools should report directly to the Superintendent, and the schools should receive whatever special attention and assistance is required.

(The Committee believes that implementation of such an effort should not preclude the Superintendent from decentralizing other functions systemwide.)

(b.) Accountability for the system and for each school

In any reform of education, the public needs to see results. As the community considers the significant investments and reforms called for in this overall plan, the school system needs to make sure that there are systems in place to make available to the community, to parents, and to students appropriate data on school and student performance.

Once a consensus is reached on the goals of the school system, the results must be made available to the public so that all are accountable. Many states and school districts have responded to this need by making information available, some in the form of a "report card" concerning the results of schools.

The Committee is convinced that accountability must start at the top, and that the school system must report results, measured against goals, on a regular basis, and that information about individual school performance and progress must also be available to all parents and the community.

The information contained in these reports should include achievement levels, attendance rates, graduation rates, and other information directly related to the goals set by the school system. The information should show school improvements over time, as well as comparisons with other schools and with national data.

Summary of the Recommendations

16. The Committee firmly believes that the District of Columbia public school system should support a school-based management system that places greater authority and responsibility within individual schools. Implementation of this program should proceed immediately, beginning with a broad program in several schools over the next several years. The purpose of this effort is to develop a climate for change among teachers, parents, and principals and have them work together to improve education. This effort will be the centerpiece of the reform effort, and will involve providing greater authority to individual schools for such items as budgeting, curricula, facilities, and personnel.

20. To make the school system accountable to the public, all schools will report accomplishments and results under a prescribed system, with an emphasis on student performance and improvement over time. This information—progress of individual students, schools, and the system—will be made available to the public in the form of an annual schoolwide report card.

B. THE CITY'S GOVERNANCE DILEMMA: THOUGHTS ON A RESOLUTION

A system of greater school-based management has significant implications for the overall governance of schools in the District of Columbia.

The Committee believes that the deep-seated issues and problems facing the District's schools must find their resolution, first and foremost, through education reform. As John Goodlad, professor of education at the University of Washington, has said, "There is no educating of young people in the school 'system'; it takes place in tens of thousands of individual schools. Reconstruction must take place then in each of these schools...Any overhaul of the system must be directed to increasing its ability to provide services to each local school."

At the same time, the school system, as a public agency, must be accountable to the taxpayer. It must make every effort to function more like the $500-million-business that it resembles. It must have effective leadership, set specific goals, develop a strong and motivated workforce, and have systems in place to monitor its own health. Without central leadership, without goals, without appropriate accountability devices to ensure the meeting of high expectations, without prompt and competent professional assistance to local schools, a reform plan will fail.

The Committee observes that, to enable the school system to function like the big business that it is, over the long term, the District would benefit by establishing clearer public accountability for schools.

(1.) The History of Education Governance in the District

The Committee recognizes that, at times, the governance of schools has been a major public issue in the District of Columbia, comparable to the debates occurring today in a number of cities and school systems across the country. In the District, historically, "there have been calls for abolition of the Board of Education, for a Board appointed by the Mayor, for drastic cuts in the budget of the Board and the salaries of its members, for a Board financially independent of the city government, for the appointment of a 'state' Board of Regents to oversee the Board of Education, and for the assignment of more authority to neighborhood school boards and councils." (See "The Governance of Education in the District of Columbia: An Historical Analysis of Current Issues" by Steven J. Diner.)

The debates about governance date back to the turn of the century, when Congress passed the Organic Act of 1906. The Act established an appointed Board of Education, while maintaining financial responsibility for schools with the Commissioners. As Diner remarks, "The heart of the school governance problem was this: an independent Board and Superintendent insulated education from political influence, but also limited the capacity of the city's general government to balance all city needs. Since education was not their direct responsibility, the Commissioners had found it especially easy to cut the school budget." This dilemma led to a series of proposals for reform by public officials and citizens' groups, with Congress maintaining overall legislative authority and responsibility for schools.

Diner continues, "The tendency inherent in the structure of divided school governance in the District toward intra-Board

factionalism, Board-Superintendent conflict, and conflicts between the Board, the Superintendent and Congress, was greatly exacerbated after World War II by the struggle for desegregation and civil rights."

With the ending of dual school systems for African-American and White students in 1954, the school governance issue became tied to the quest for home rule in the District of Columbia. At the same time, according to Diner, "beginning in the mid-1960s, many people involved with big city school systems in the United States started to advocate decentralization and community control. Although true delegation of powers to community school boards never occurred in Washington, decentralization and community control became major issues in school governance in the nation's capital in the decade from the middle 1960s to the middle 1970s."

Diner continues, "in 1968, Congress finally passed legislation providing for the election of an eleven-member Board of Education, but with no more fiscal independence than its predecessor." The change represented a significant step toward home rule, but did nothing to resolve problems associated with the division of responsibility for education, and to remedy the intra-system conflicts that had become the norm.

(2.) The Current Governance System

The Home Rule Charter vests control of the public schools in the Board of Education, an independent agency of the City government. The Board consists of 11 members chosen for 4-year terms, 1 elected by voters in each of the city's 8 wards and 3 at large. The Board has one non-voting seat reserved for a student. The Board conducts its business through 11 standing committees. The Board employs approximately 35 staff members including an executive secretary, full-time secretaries for each board member, and up to 3 assistants for each board member.

By statute, "the Board shall determine all questions of general policy relating to the schools, shall appoint the executive officers hereinafter provided for, define their duties, and direct expenditures." Like other executive agencies, the Board of Education makes rules to carry out its policies and to implement District laws enacted by the City Council and Congress. Board committees perform oversight functions, direct the production of information from the administration, conduct hearings, and make recommendations to the full Board. The Board also sets policies for hiring principals and high-level school officials, and reserves the power of accepting or rejecting the Superintendent's appointments to these positions.

The Superintendent of Schools is appointed by majority vote of the Board for a three-year term. By statute, the Superintendent "shall have the direction of and supervision in all matters pertaining to the instruction in all the schools under the Board of Education." Board regulations invest the Superintendent with this responsibility and with "the daily operation and management of the school system." Among the Superintendent's specified powers are implementation of Board rules; determination of the system's structure; direction, supervision, and personnel actions regarding all school employees other than Board staff; budget preparation; and contract negotiations and procurement.

The role of the Mayor and the City Council in education stems from their financing and budgetary responsibilities. The Board of Education does not have independent taxing authority, and is provided with funds upon recommendation of the Mayor and action by the City Council. The Home Rule Charter establishes that the Mayor and Council determine the overall amount of the local appropriated budget,

but that only the Board may determine how it is spent.

Other city executive agencies also have relevant responsibilities, such as supervision of school building projects under the capital budget, a responsibility of the Department of Public Works that is being assumed by the public school system, school health services (Department of Human Services), and conduct of law suits (Corporation Counsel). In the case of the capital budget, for example, the Department of Public Works exercises certain responsibilities for negotiating and supervising construction contracts, while mandated city debt limits determine the availability of bond financing for these efforts. Health services, such as nurses' offices in schools, are within the purview of the Department of Human Services.

Congress' unique role with respect to the District of Columbia extends to the public school system. The Home Rule Charter "vests control of the public schools" in the Board of Education, subject to the plenary authority reserved by Congress in granting authority. Final approval of school budgets, including line items and reprogrammings, rests with Congress. In recent years Congress has approved school budgets as received, except for the appropriation of small additional sums for specified purposes.

The division of control and responsibility among the various public bodies in the District is common to many big city school districts. Where the District's system is unique is in the ultimate power of Congress to legislate on any subject and the requirement of Congressional approval for budget actions as well as laws involving the public schools. The District is also unique in its multiple roles. To its residents, it stands as state, county, and city. The District is also unique in the historical development of the Board of Education in performing its functions.

(3.) Governance in Other Jurisdictions

The Committee examined key characteristics of other governance structures in use around the nation and found:

1. Most Boards of Education are elected.

- Of 37 cities surveyed by the Council of Great City Schools approximately 2 years ago, 32 (86 percent) elect the members of the board of education.

2. Many boards have independent authority to raise revenue.

- Of the same 37 cities, the education boards of 27 had independent budget authority.

3. Most boards do not have large, independent staffs.

- Only in 11 of 61 cities surveyed by the Council of Great City Schools did independent staffs work exclusively for the school or education board. In some of these cases, the staff performed administrative and secretarial functions.

School governance issues and problems are not unique to the District of Columbia; in particular, many cities are facing difficult issues of governance.

(4.) Observations Concerning Governance

(a.) Division of authority within the District

The heart of the dilemma of the divided authority over D.C. public schools is that the school system is fiscally dependent on the city, but the Board of Education has independent policy authority. Although not

unique to the District, the fact that policy and fiscal responsibility are split between the Board and the Mayor means that no single person or group is fully accountable for the schools.

Under the current system, priorities determined by the Superintendent and the Board of Education are subject to revision by the Mayor and the City Council through the budget process.

Congress has final authority. Often, the funds appropriated are substantially different from the amounts requested. When this occurs, the school system is forced to restructure education programs.

In addition, year-to-year fluctuations in funding and the complicated budget process under which the city and the school system must operate make it difficult to undertake effective long-term planning.

The Committee believes that the current system fails to impose any real sense of financial or overall accountability on the Board of Education, as its members are ultimately not answerable to taxpayers for the costs, and therefore outcomes, of schooling.

The Committee's observation, after numerous conversations with officials and others throughout the District, is that this diffusion of authority contributes to a lack of shared objectives among the city's officials concerning education. Further, this problem is exacerbated by the fact that individuals in one elected body may well campaign for political office against those holding other elected positions. Too frequently, discussions of children and their needs are lost in the middle of these competing interests.

(b.) Division of authority within the school system

As the Committee conducted its review of the District of Columbia's public schools, the RAND Corporation released a study of six cities that have mobilized to improve schools. The study, while not identifying a single method for reform, identified key components that are necessary.

The RAND report states: "The school superintendent is usually the single most important actor in the improvement process, whether that person is the initial architect or an indispensable member of a coalition of improvement-oriented groups. No improvement effort that we studied caught fire without an active superintendent willing to interact with community forces and to attack the school system's inertia. The superintendent, in short, is the essential link between schools and the community."

With respect to any board of education, the report notes: "School board consensus on goals gives the superintendent the tactical flexibility that he needs for effective leadership of the school system. It also frees the superintendent to perform community leadership functions....Board micromanagement almost certainly rules out major systemwide change."

The RAND Corporation report recognizes the difficulty in establishing this balance between a superintendent and a board of education. Some circumstances, where the school system is not functioning as well as it should, rightfully encourage micromanagement by a board of education.

As the Committee talked with the District's Superintendent of Schools and the members of its Board of Education during this project, it developed a sense that all who are involved recognize that an optimal situation does not currently exist. The central office, and therefore the overall school system, does not function at a level of efficiency and effectiveness that is desirable. Therefore, the Board of Education tends to become involved in the resolution of problems and issues that are more typically dealt with by administrative staff. At the same time, everyone wants to make meaningful improvements in the schools. Further, when it comes to roles and responsibilities, the

Committee believes that there is a consensus as to roles.

The Superintendent of Schools must be seen as the chief executive officer of the public school system. He or she is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school system and for accomplishing the broad objectives and policies established by the Board of Education.

The Committee recognizes that when the central administration is not performing efficiently in the delivery of services, partly in response to constituent demands, the Board of Education becomes more intimately involved in the day-to-day management of the school system than is typical in the average school district.

The Committee believes that the Board of Education should set broad policy and monitor the overall performance of the school system. The Board should function as a board of directors in a business sense, and not be involved in the operation of the schools.

(c.) Business and community leaders

The RAND study also focuses on the important roles played by business and community leaders in the six cities that were studied. The researchers concluded, "They (business leaders and local civic foundations) are prominent in all large cities and possess the funds, technical resources, staff, and motivation, that, properly focused, can make a major difference in schools....But sentiment and eagerness to act are not enough. The most successful business efforts have been focused and well integrated as a result of local systemwide improvement strategies."

The Committee also identified a number of programs around the country where local governments, business associations, and employers have teamed together to expand education, training, and employment opportunities. These programs have taken different forms. In some cases, businesses and school systems have teamed to set concrete and measurable standards for student achievement with a commitment to reward accomplishment by supporting higher education or guaranteeing employment.

In other instances, there are significant programs to ease the passage from school to work, including internships and apprenticeships.

In still other cases there are certain business policies that promote education. Expanded flextime, family leave and child-care policies have contributed to corporate climates that support the essential parental responsibilities of men and women in the community.

Although there are a number of useful business and civic efforts in Washington to improve schools, and many examples of the policies and practices described above, the Committee believes that Washington's business and civic community is not yet doing its full share. The business and civic community must coordinate overall efforts more, commit to raising funds for particular projects, provide overall support for education, and perhaps guarantee jobs for those who graduate and possess the requisite skills. In short, business leaders in Washington must take additional steps to provide the focused, broad-based support that the school system needs.

(d.) Parents

One of the fundamental beliefs of this Committee is that parents' involvement is essential for schools to be successful. Its overall assessment of the District's schools is that there is a significant need for greater parental involvement.

In too many cases, parents are inactive where a principal and the faculty seek greater involvement. In too many other cases, where parents are eager to be involved in schools, principals and teachers actively discourage such involvement.

In the successful schools the Committee

visited, parents were involved. In New Haven, CT, parents participated in school governance teams. In Miami, FL, parents volunteered to provide support in a number of schools. In other cities, parent education programs are an integral part of the strategy to improve learning for children. Further, good schools in the District encourage, and receive, the involvement of parents.

(5.) Conclusions

The Committee understands fully that addressing governance alone would not resolve the major issues facing the school system. In the absence of substantive change in other areas, dealing with the governance issue is not likely to have a profound effect. The Committee further recognizes that schools can function well under very different governance models.

However, given the District's particular history, and inasmuch as governance affects the ability of the school system to deliver educational services to children, issues raised by the current governance structure must be addressed as part of any long-term effort to improve the schools.

Further, as a first step in increasing the involvement of business and community leaders in education in the District, the Committee recommends the creation of an organization of business and community leaders to support education. This group, a newly constituted D.C. Committee on Public Education, would:

1. Work with the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to carry out a plan to strengthen the schools;

2. Serve as an advocate for public education within the city and in Congress;

3. Inform the community about the importance of education and the progress of the schools;

4. Organize business, foundation, and community support for particular projects to strengthen schools; and

5. Monitor the overall performance of the school system and the implementation of efforts to strengthen schools.

The membership of this proposed committee would have a broad base and include representatives of the business community, civic leaders, religious leaders, parents, and others interested in supporting public education. The membership would also be large, numbering hundreds of individuals and organizations. There would be a board of directors that represented the total membership. In general, the business community should provide basic support for the activities of the organization; any special projects would be funded through the foundation and business community. The Committee would be staffed by an Executive Director and a secretary; there would be no other staff to the organization.

Summary of the Recommendations

17. The Committee offers the following recommendations with respect to the governance of the school system:

(a) In order to set clear public accountability for schools in the District, both policy responsibility and financial responsibility over the long-term must rest with a single entity, the Board of Education. The Committee therefore recommends that the city and the Board of Education reach an agreement to provide broad, stable financial support for schools over a multi-year period. In this way, the Board would become the accountable organization for education. If a firm agreement cannot be reached concern-

ing the financing of schools, the parties should then provide the Board with taxing authority. Under this authority, the Board should have the power to seek increased funding for particular school improvements, on top of any existing financial base, through the levying of additional taxes and or revenue-raising measures.

(b) See 17(b) below.

(c) As the central office becomes more efficient and assumes greater day-to-day control over the operations of the school system, there will be an opportunity for the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to establish a clearer definition of roles and responsibilities. The Board of Education needs to function as the equivalent of a Board of Directors; the Superintendent of Schools needs to function as the chief executive officer. As the central office becomes more effective in the operations of the school system, the Board of Education should reassess its organization with the goal of streamlining it and simplifying overall relationships with the central office. This reassessment might include reducing the size of the staff, reducing the number of committees, and reducing interaction in the day-to-day supervision of the school system.

(d) The Committee supports the current efforts of the school system to carry out its operations independent of other city agencies. In that regard, the Committee endorses the school system's assumption of greater responsibility for the capital program and for managing its assets.

Most important, the school system should be able to retain receipts from the disposal of properties for the purpose of repairing and rehabilitating the existing inventory of buildings.

19. The Committee recommends creation of a broad-based independent organization, a new organization, also to be named the D.C. Committee on Public Education, to support public education activities in the District in the following ways:

- Provide funding for special projects;
- Increase community awareness of the public schools;
- Support the budget for education before the City Council and Congress;
- Monitor the progress of the school system and the implementation of the plan;
- Provide support to the school system and the Board of Education, as requested; and
- Provide technical expertise as requested.

C. THE SCHOOL AS A BUSINESS: MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL

(1.) Introduction

The Committee compared the management of the District of Columbia's Public School System with that of other districts, as well as with other public and private sector institutions. Its key findings are:

1. The District needs to create a strong principal corps that will be responsible for the management of schools throughout the system. This corps must be an elite, well-paid group with superior management capacity and initiative.

2. To become more efficient and to concentrate on the education of children, the D.C. Public School System needs to divest itself of certain functions and responsibilities. At the same time, the District must upgrade its management information systems so that basic information necessary to manage the enterprise will be available on a timely basis.

3. The District needs to reduce and rationalize its central office and support functions by streamlining operations and redirecting savings to support teaching and learning at the school building level.

4. The District needs to make management at the central level of the school system more professional, greatly strengthening the support available to schools, particularly at the administrative level.

(2.) A Strong Principal Corps

During this project the Committee heard a universal message from researchers, practitioners, teachers, students, and members of the Board of Education. If there is a single key to a successful school, it is a strong and capable principal.

(a.) Principals in the District of Columbia

In the District of Columbia, the typical principal is a former teacher who has been in the system for a number of years, an African-American woman in her forties or fifties.

Principals are selected by the Superintendent of Schools, who either may directly appoint another principal to a vacant position or recommend one of the three candidates most highly ranked by a selection panel of administrators and parent/community representatives. Unless the first (lateral transfer) method is used, the Board has final authority over the appointment, although the candidate appointed must have been recommended by the Superintendent. All principals appointed since 1982 serve under three-year contracts, with reappointment by the Superintendent's recommendation and Board approval.

The requirements for the principalship are: a master's degree, five years of experience in education or a related field, four years of experience in a supervisory position in education or a related field, or two years as a principal or assistant principal.

Principals cannot now be granted tenure, but union contract provisions and personnel regulations place practical limits on administrative freedom to remove employees at will. Principals are evaluated on their overall performance by the supervising assistant superintendent.

As in most school systems, the D.C. principal's first duty is to be the educational leader and manager of the school—to set standards, to work with teachers, to create a climate that emphasizes and encourages teaching and learning. Other responsibilities include obtaining services and supplies for all building needs, schoolwide planning,

scheduling, student admissions, discipline, records and reporting—everything that happens in the school.

The principal directs, supervises, and evaluates school staff, including, for the first time in some years, custodians, security aides, and cafeteria workers. Principals have the ability to accept or reject new hires for vacant positions, but must take transferred employees as assigned. They cannot transfer employees out or discipline them, although they can document unsatisfactory performance and recommend discipline, dismissal, or transfer. The principal's supervisors may reverse a particular action—for example, a teacher evaluation, exclusion of a student, or changing a grade—if they consider that the circumstances warrant it.

The Committee's overall assessment of the principal corps is that there are many excellent principals in the school system. At the same time, however, the Committee observed several poor performers who have not had the benefit of the training and development necessary to manage a school. Further, the Committee found evidence that, in the past, those who did not perform well at the school level were transferred to the central office.

The reforms that the Committee is calling for will require expanded training and development opportunities for principals. In addition, there must be systems in place that will identify those who cannot or will not perform and remove them from the schools.

(b.) Salary comparisons

Principals in the District of Columbia make less than their counterparts in the surrounding jurisdictions. Figure IV-1 shows that minimum salaries in the District for principals are approximately equal to the average minimum salaries of the surrounding jurisdictions (this results in part from a low figure in Prince George's County that applies to few individuals), but maximum salaries for principals in the District are about 15.3 percent lower than the average maximum salaries of the surrounding jurisdictions.

When the Committee compared salaries for principals in the District with the amounts received by principals in five other cities, and adjusted for cost-of-living differences, it found that overall starting salaries in the District were 12 percent lower, with the maximum salary in the District being 16 percent lower.

(c.) Training and development activities

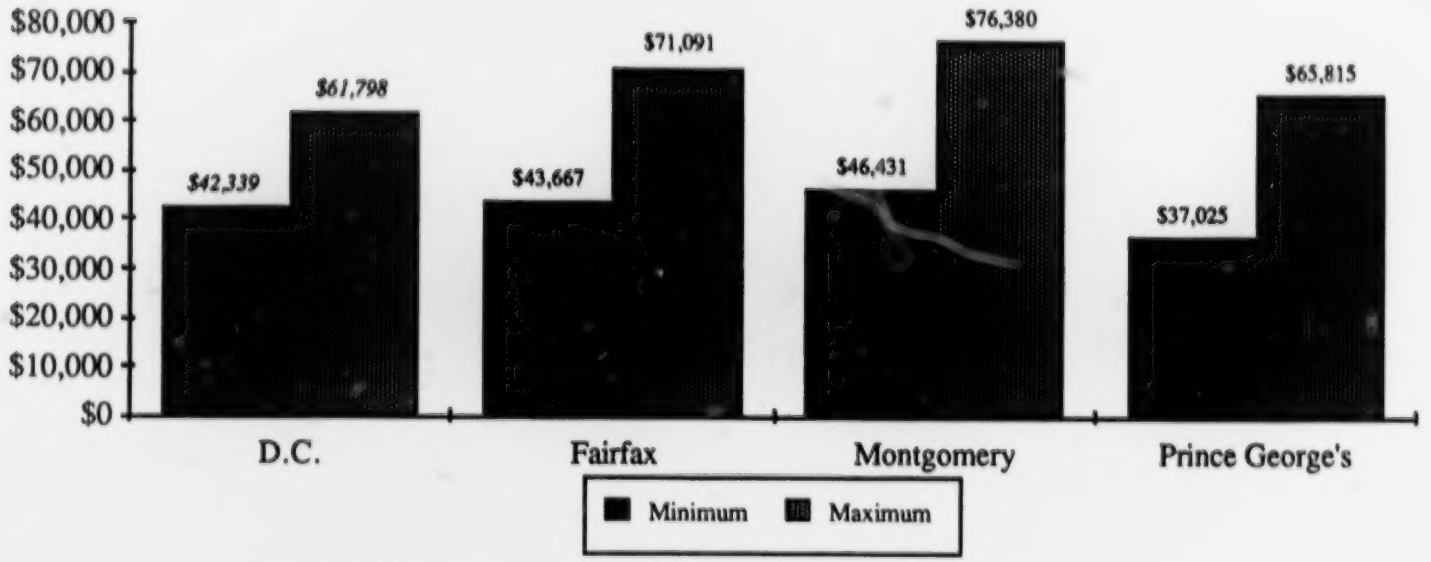
The Committee has reviewed a number of training and development programs for principals throughout the country, including an excellent program in Dade County, FL. It believes that the District needs to strengthen its training and development programs to correspond to the level of effort and attention provided in these jurisdictions.

(d.) Recommendations with respect to principals

To establish a professional corps of managers as principals in the District of Columbia public schools, the Committee recommends:

1. Upgrading salaries so that, over time, principals are, except for a few positions at the central office, the highest-paid managers in the District of Columbia public schools. Included in this proposal is the creation of merit pay pools for outstanding principals;
2. Strengthening the training and development program for new and current principals, patterning the program after those of a number of other school districts, such as Miami, FL; and
3. Establishing a policy that principals whose schools are not performing well against systemwide and school-specific goals are removed and returned to

FIGURE IV-1
COMPARISON OF MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL SALARIES IN D.C. AND SURROUNDING JURISDICTIONS
1988-89



Source: Survey of School Districts.

teacher status, not transferred to the central office.

(3.) Rationalization of Responsibilities and Better Management Information

The Committee has not had the opportunity to examine the District's adult education program in detail. However, based on observations and conversations with the Board of Education and the Office of the Mayor, the Committee believes that there is a need to have the District of Columbia public schools concentrate and focus efforts on its primary mission: the education of children. Accordingly, the Committee recommends transfer of the adult education program to the University of the District of Columbia, on the assumption that the logistics and details of this transfer can be worked out among the appropriate parties.

The Committee also observes that adult education supported with taxpayers' funds should focus exclusively on basic literacy and the high school equivalency diploma (GED). It found evidence of public resources being used for other activities, such as assistance in tax preparation, and believes that public funds should not support adult education programs that are not geared to meeting the basic education requirements of those without a high school diploma.

In the Committee's numerous interactions with the school system, it found employees who were cooperative and willing to provide whatever information was available to meet its needs. However, the Committee also found that basic management information systems were lacking, and that without such information management of the school system is extremely difficult. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that efforts be devoted to developing basic management information systems, including records management, within the public school system.

(4.) Management Improvements and Savings

(a.) Introduction

As part of the Committee's examination of the school system, Peat Marwick Main & Co. conducted an operations review of activities outside schools. The areas reviewed included overall organization and management, central administration, administrative services, human resource management, and educational programs and operations (central staff).

(b.) Major findings

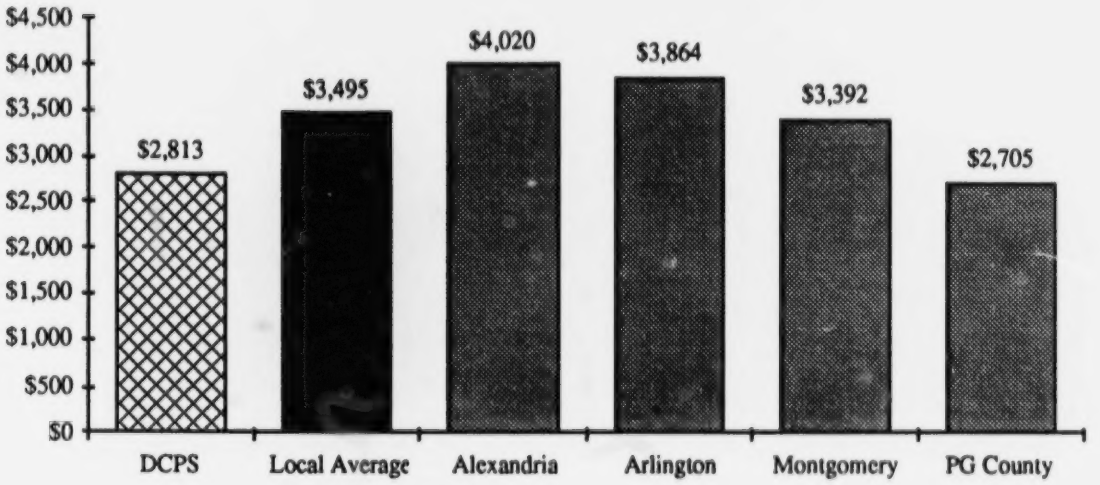
As in other large urban school systems, Peat Marwick found opportunities for the District's central office to become more efficient and effective. When the District was compared with the surrounding jurisdictions and with other cities, adjusted for cost-of-living differences, Peat Marwick found interesting results:

1. The D.C. Public School System is currently spending approximately $536 to $682 less, per student, on instruction than the sample, comparable urban districts and local jurisdictions are, respectively (see Figures IV-2 and IV-3); and
2. The D.C. system is spending approximately $179 to $324 more, per student, on general non-instructional support—even after excluding items such as transportation and food services—than the sample districts are (see Figures IV-4 and IV-5).

Figure IV-6 indicates how the D.C. school system's revenues are spent per pupil as a percentage of the budget. The system spends approximately 6 percent less of its

FIGURE IV-2

ADJUSTED EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL FOR INSTRUCTION*
IN DOLLARS PER STUDENT (Local)



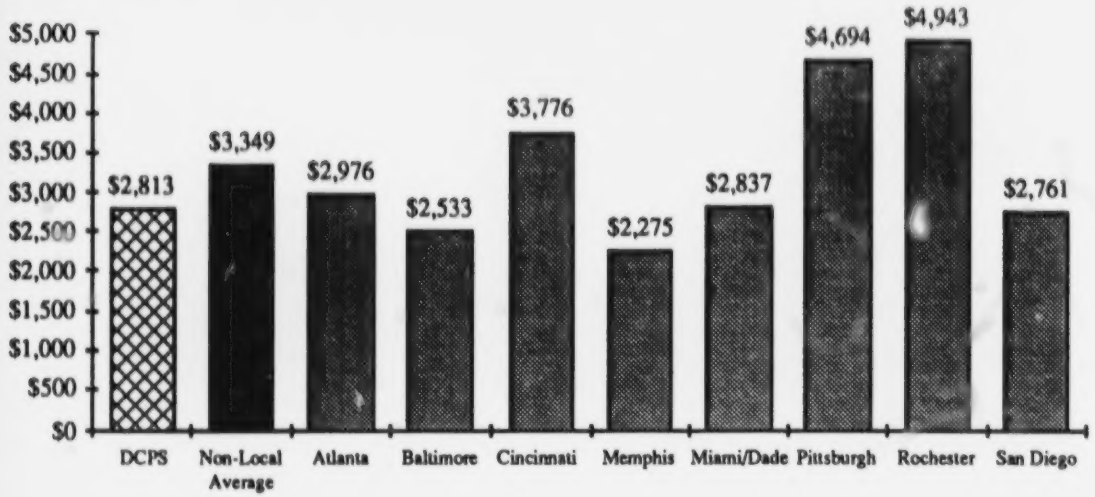
The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $682 less per student for instruction than the local average.

** Instruction programs include any activities related to academic or vocational learning experiences. These may include regular and secondary programs as well as specialized programs designed for gifted and talented, mentally retarded, physically handicapped, or other students with special needs.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-3

ADJUSTED EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL FOR INSTRUCTION*
IN DOLLARS PER STUDENT (Non-local)



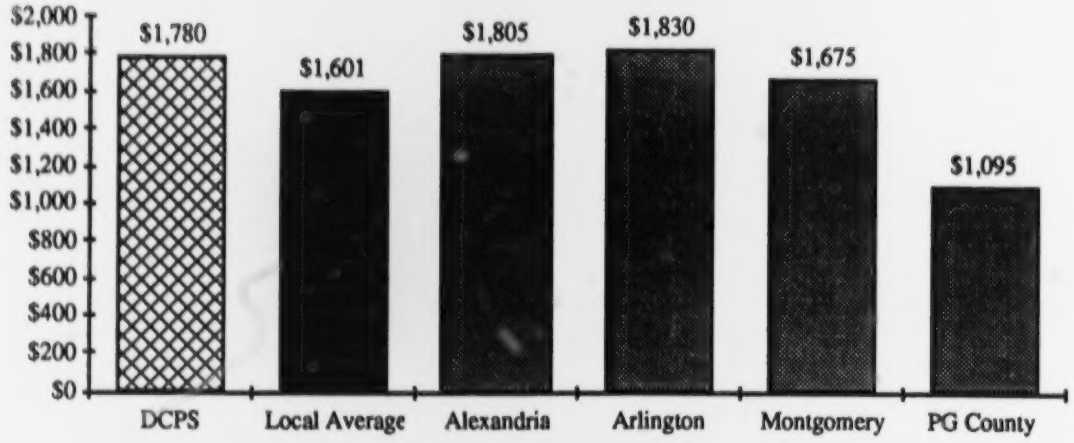
The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $536 less for instruction than the non-local average.

* *Instruction programs include any activities related to academic or vocational learning experiences. These may include regular and secondary programs as well as specialized programs designed for gifted and talented, mentally retarded, physically handicapped, or other students with special needs.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-4

ADJUSTED EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL FOR GENERAL SUPPORT*
IN DOLLARS PER STUDENT (Local)



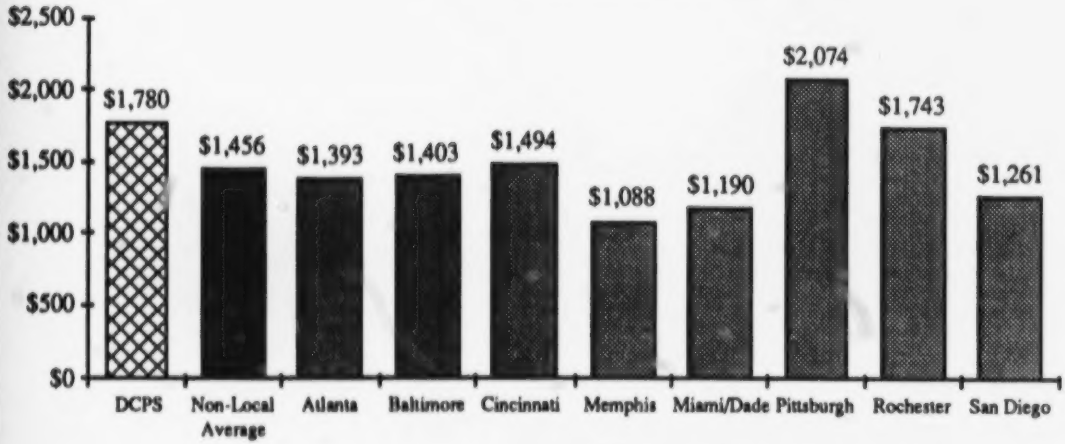
The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $179 more on general non-instructional support than the local districts.

* *General support includes those activities concerned with managing and administering the overall operation of the school system. Activities included in this category are Board of Education support, central administration, budget and finance, materials management, operation and maintenance of the physical plant, personnel, and data processing.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-5

ADJUSTED EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL FOR GENERAL SUPPORT*
IN DOLLARS PER STUDENT (Non-Local)



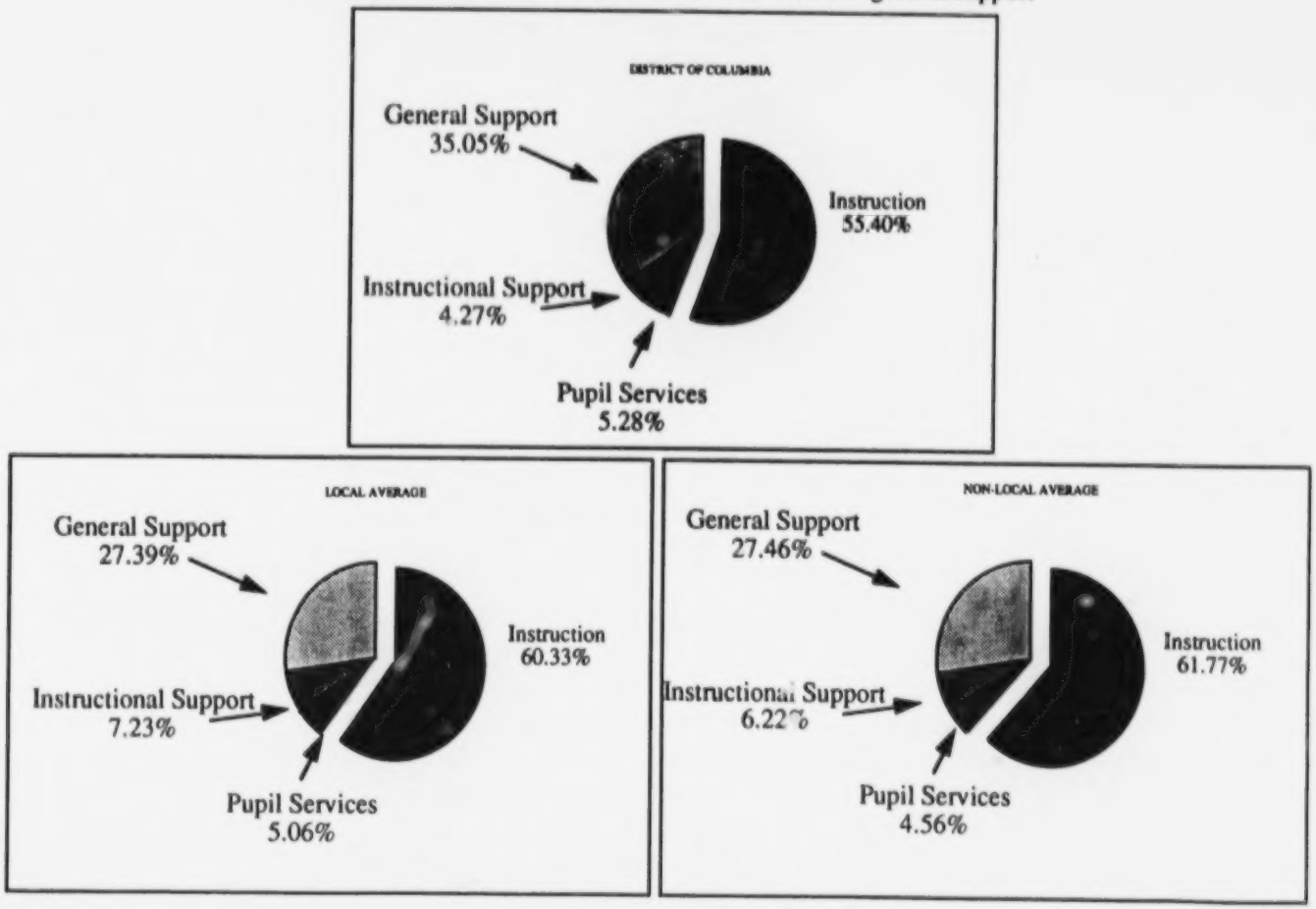
The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $324 more on general non-instructional support than the non-local districts.

* *General support includes those activities concerned with managing and administering the overall operation of the school system. Activities included in this category are Board of Education support, central administration, budget and finance, materials management, operation and maintenance of the physical plant, personnel, and data processing.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-6

DCPS spends approximately 6% less of its budget on instruction than either the local or non-local school districts and 8% more on non-instructional general support



budget on instruction than either the urban or local school districts and 8 percent more on non-instructional general support.

Staffing comparisons yield the same results. Excluding the state services functions, transportation, and facility maintenance, the following results are obtained:

1. The District school system employs from 865 to 1,251 more non-school-based personnel than the local and non-local districts (see Figures IV-7 and IV-8).
2. The D.C. system has a much higher concentration of non-school-based instructional support staff than the local and non-local districts (see Figure IV-9).

In addition, when Peat Marwick compared central administration, human resources, and operating staff in the District with surrounding and other urban jurisdictions, it found similar results (see Figures IV-10 and IV-11).

In addition to the comparisons, Peat Marwick conducted on-site interviews and analyzed D.C. practices, during which they identified several major problems affecting operating effectiveness. These included:

1. Consistently narrow span of control. There are levels of management supervising a very narrow range of responsibilities.
2. Confusing and unwieldy budget. There is a lack of uniformity and consistency in the budget process, and limited relationships with other management information systems.
3. Weak overall integration of automated systems.
4. Lack of management expectations, accountability, and measurements of performance. There is limited emphasis placed on the performance, quality, and productivity of support and processing staff.

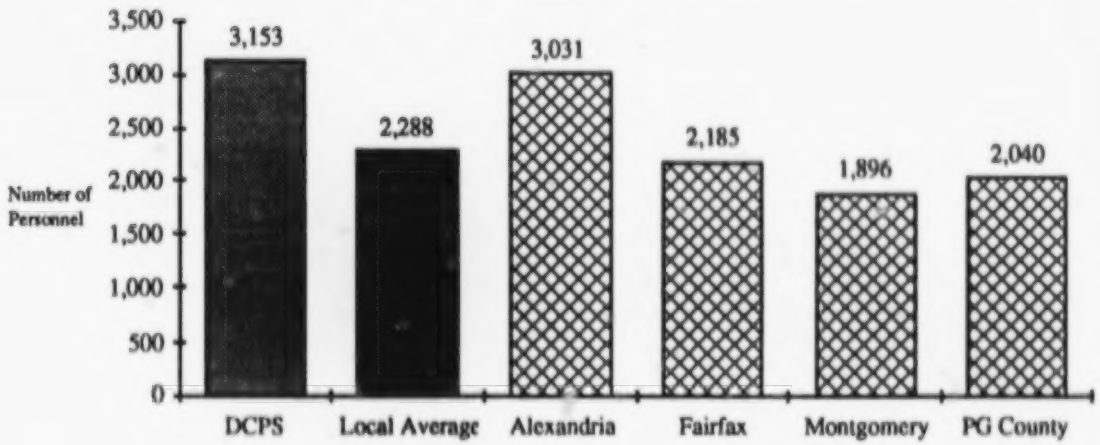
On the basis of this review, Peat Marwick recommends the reduction of staff levels by 400 positions, for an annual savings when fully implemented of approximately $8.5 million. In addition, Peat Marwick has identified further opportunities for contracting out functions, with potential savings of $3 million annually when fully implemented. Finally, Peat Marwick's review has identified other cost savings opportunities, including facility closures (see Chapter V), the savings from which are reflected elsewhere in the report.

The Committee's overall assessment of the central office is that there is a tremendous need for improvement. There are many hard-working, dedicated individuals in the central office. But the reality is that the central office is perceived by teachers, principals, parents, and the Board of Education as non-responsive. The critical support functions—facilities, supplies, and textbooks—have significant problems. The central office has, quite frankly, been staffed in many instances by individuals who do not have the expertise or capacity to do their jobs adequately. The Committee has concluded that major efforts must be made to upgrade the personnel and improve the management capacity of the central office if it is to function as a service organization.

The savings that the Committee recommends, which can be realized over several years, should be accomplished through hiring freezes, offering early retirement, and transferring individuals to schools. The Committee does not recommend layoffs. It also notes that the reductions represent only about 10 percent of the non-instructional support staff in the school system, and this overhead reduction target has been met, and exceeded, in many of the cities and suburban jurisdictions studied.

FIGURE IV-7

COMPARATIVE STAFFING ALL NON-SCHOOL BASED PERSONNEL
TO SERVE D.C. STUDENT POPULATION SIZE (Local)



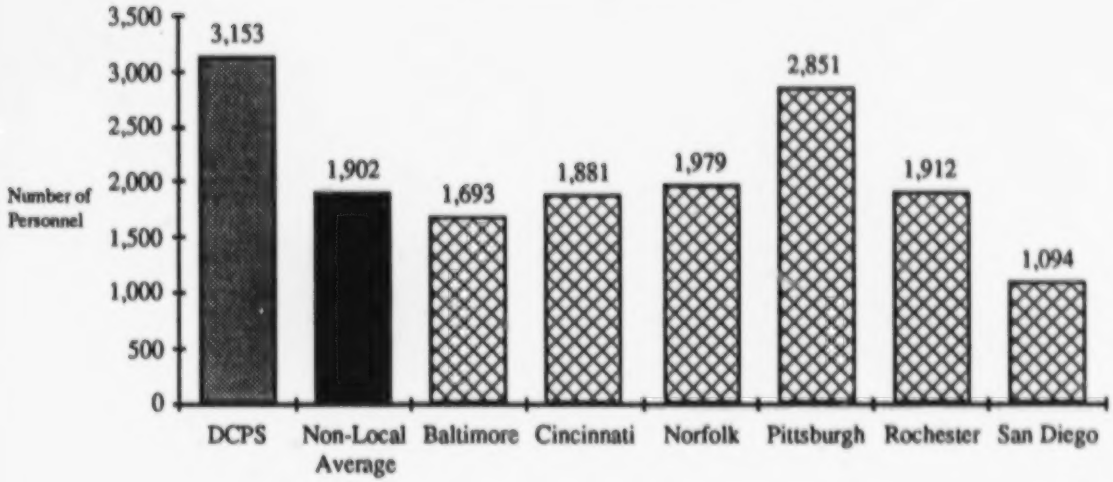
The D.C. Public School System employs over 865 more non-school based staff to support its student population than the average of local school districts to support the same student population.

Note: This excludes all school based personnel (teachers, counselors, aides) and the state service functions, transportation, and facility maintenance.

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-8

COMPARATIVE STAFFING ALL NON-SCHOOL BASED PERSONNEL
TO SERVE D.C. STUDENT POPULATION (Non-local)



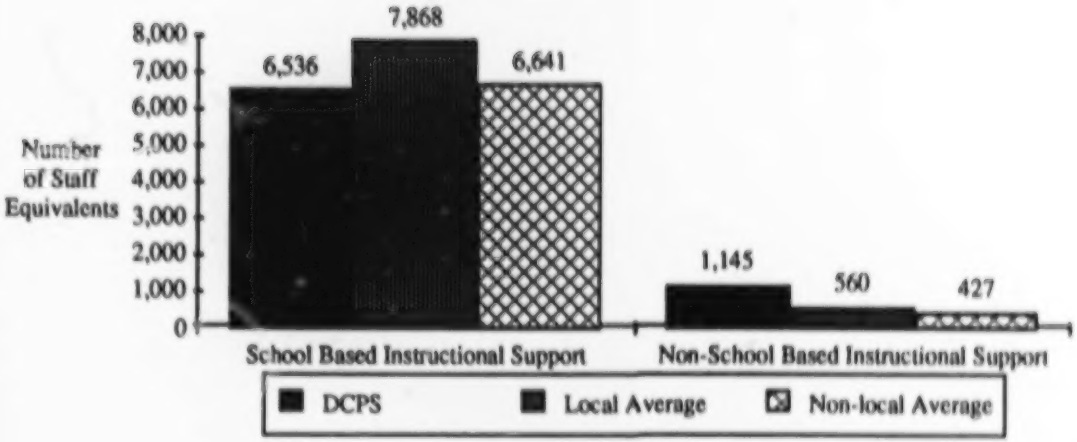
The D.C. Public School System employs over 1,251 more non-school based staff to support its student population than the average of non-local school districts to support the same student population.

Note: This excludes all school based personnel (teachers, counselors, aides) and the state service functions, transportation, and facility maintenance.

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-9

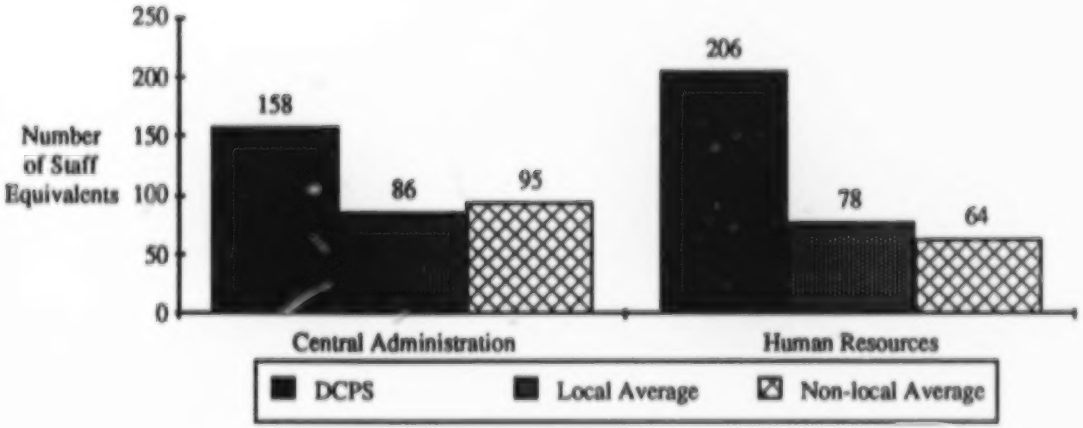
COMPARATIVE STAFFING DCPS
WITH LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL AVERAGES
ADJUSTED STAFF EQUIVALENTS



The D.C. Public School System employs from 105 to 1,332 less school-based instructional staff than the local and non-local average, and 585 to 718 more non-school-based instructional staff.

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-10
COMPARATIVE STAFFING DCPS
WITH LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL AVERAGES
ADJUSTED STAFF EQUIVALENTS



The D.C. Public School System employs from 63 to 72 more central administration staff than the local and non-local average, and 128 to 142 more human resource personnel.

- *Central administration is defined as the units found in the Office of the Superintendent including direct administrative support, communications, legal services, research, management analysis, and Board support.*

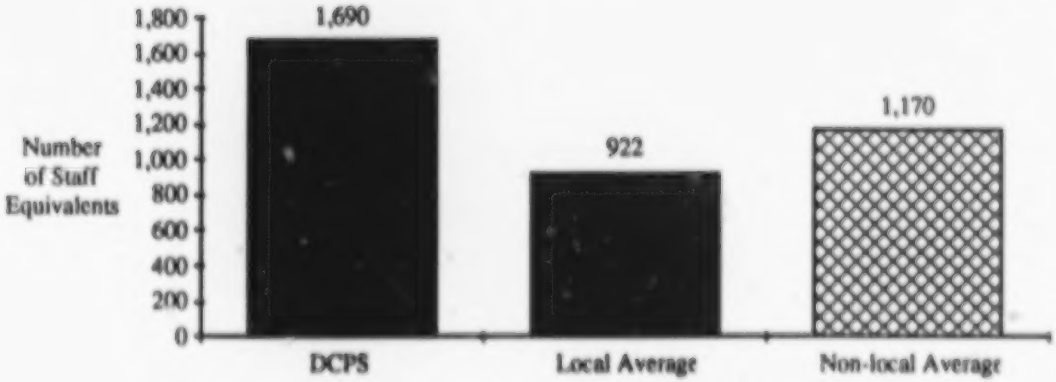
- *Human resources includes personnel, human relations, EEO, sex equity, and the teacher services function.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE IV-11

COMPARATIVE STAFFING DCPS
WITH LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL AVERAGES
ADJUSTED STAFF EQUIVALENTS

OPERATING STAFF



The D.C. Public School System employs from 520 to 768 more operating staff than the local and non-local average.

• *Operating staffing includes finance and budget, human resource management, food services, procurement, safety and security, warehousing, mail and printing, and data processing.*

Source: Peat Marwick.

Summary of the Recommendations

17(b) As part of the effort to introduce school-based management and overall reform, the central office needs to become more efficient and service oriented so that each school can reach its maximum potential.

Further, the school system needs to undertake efforts to professionalize central level management, particularly with respect to the performance of support functions.

The Committee recommends streamlining administrative and overhead functions within the school system, ultimately reducing 400 positions for an annual savings of $8.5 million. This streamlining should use the Peat Marwick study as the basis for identifying specific actions to be taken. The reductions will be accomplished over several years and will use attrition, early retirement, and transfers to available positions in schools.

18. The Committee recommends several measures to improve the overall management of the school system, including:

(a) Upgrading the principal corps within the District by increasing compensation, providing better developmental and training programs, and employing procedures that will remove those who are not meeting goals and requirements;

(b) Transferring responsibility for adult education to the University of the District of Columbia; and

(c) Upgrading management information systems so that basic information necessary to manage the enterprise will be available on a timely basis, including the provision of a records center and the keeping of good records.

V. FACILITIES: THE NEED FOR BETTER BUILDINGS

The Committee firmly believes that students and teachers need clean, comfortable, safe, and well-equipped buildings in which to learn and work. Good buildings alone do not make good schools. But if the roof leaks, if plaster is falling, if windows are falling out, and if doors are broken, the message is conveyed that what is going on inside is not important, that the school system is uncaring, and that neglect is tolerated. A building in poor repair contributes to the attitude and discipline problems among students, which in turn contributes to poor performance in schools. Hence, as a community we must, at a minimum, provide our teachers and students with facilities that are decent and safe.

The message of this report is that, by and large, buildings in the District of Columbia are in poor shape. The District is not unique in this regard; many other cities have similar problems. But if we are to seriously improve the climate for learning in the District, we need a major, sustained effort over the next three to five years to put our facilities in good repair.

(A.) GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE FACILITIES REVIEW

With respect to facilities, the Committee set out to:

- ❑ Evaluate the quality, state of repair, and state of design of existing school facilities;
- ❑ Develop a long-range facilities plan for the school system; and
- ❑ Review and make recommendations on maintenance systems and organization, as well as capital budgeting systems.

In the course of its evaluation, the Committee examined the quality and state of repair of existing structures, along with their value, use, needs, and disposal opportunities. The facilities group also reviewed the number and type of facilities that would be needed to support quality education over the next several years, based upon an assessment of existing conditions and future requirements. Finally, the Committee reviewed the operation of the school system with respect to its maintenance and asset management functions.

The Committee firmly believes that the school system's facilities should fulfill its educational objectives and program needs. The Committee's recommendations concerning facilities correspond with the broad directions of the education recommendations throughout the report. It was not possible, however, to integrate fully all education recommendations with specific plans for facilities. Such integration must occur during the implementation of this report.

(B.) METHODOLOGY

The Committee gathered data and received information from five principal sources.

First, it convened a series of town meetings at which it heard how students, teachers, parents, and administrators feel about the quality of the school buildings. The Committee listened to their specific requests and the long litany of needs, which they described so eloquently.

Second, the Committee surveyed over 1,200 teachers concerning their working conditions. It asked them to rate their facilities, describe any problems, and discuss the impact of their working environment on the mission of the schools.

Third, and most important, the Committee formed teams of volunteers from the private sector and the Federal government—engineers, architects, builders, construction workers, developers, and maintenance personnel—to visit each and every school in the system and to conduct a

comprehensive facilities review of that school. These 70 concerned individuals donated over 200 work days to learn first hand about the condition and future use of schools; their findings are documented in a series of school-by-school reports. (Note: many of these volunteers have expressed a willingness to continue working to help implement the facilities recommendations in this report.)

Fourth, the Committee relied heavily on the expertise and information provided by officials and staff of the D.C. Public School System, both in the central office and at the schools themselves. The Committee found many people to be knowledgeable about the facilities and the system's needs. Many individuals took extra time, and showed great patience, in providing and explaining existing operations and conditions of the buildings.

Fifth, the Committee relied on a number of operational reviews and planning documents prepared by consultants, including Peat Marwick Main & Co., as well as earlier building surveys prepared by parents.

(C.) MAJOR FINDINGS

The Committee noted several very positive developments in the course of its review. Many of the building personnel take great pride in their buildings, and work extremely hard to have them function as well as they can. The Committee found schools in the District to be clean. It was also impressed by the principals' interest in making their buildings as conducive to learning as possible.

(1.) The Inventory

The 199 facilities that comprise the inventory of the D.C. public school system are categorized in Table V-1:

Table V-1.
Facilities of the District of Columbia public schools.

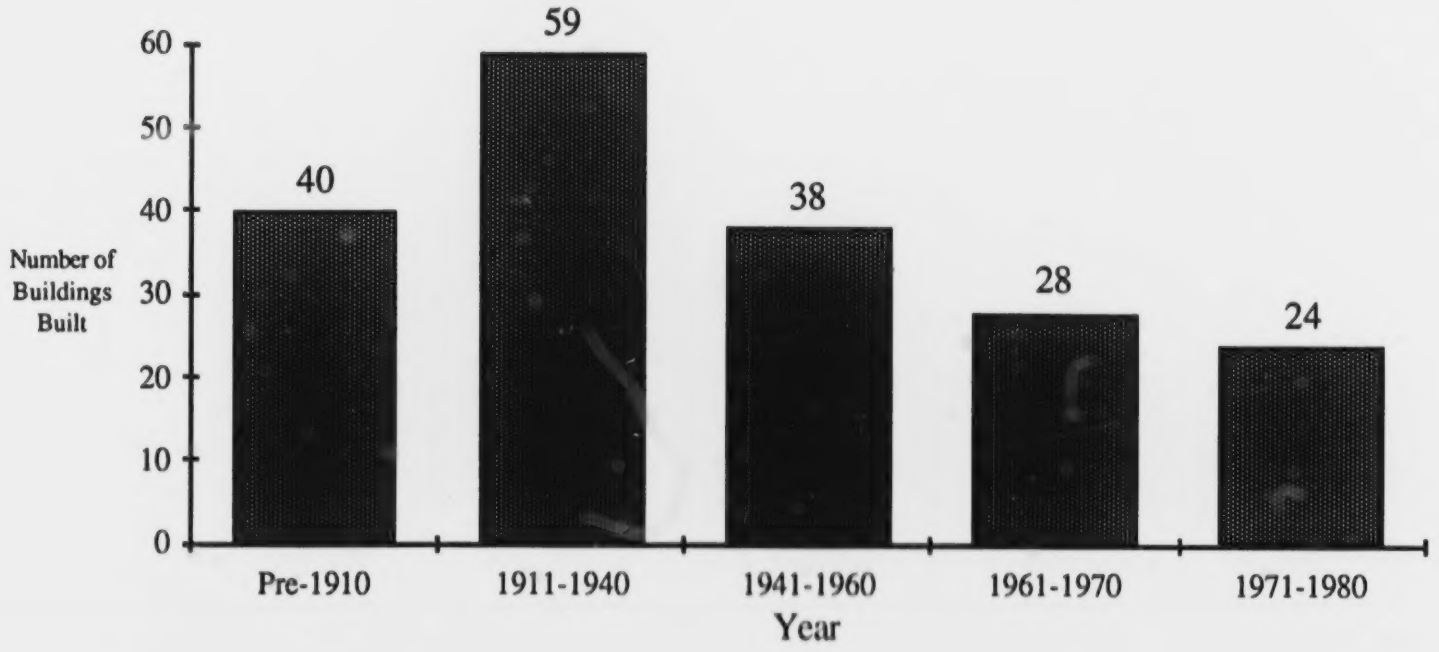
Type	Number
Elementary Schools	120
Middle Schools	2
Junior High Schools	26
Elementary/Junior High Schools	2
Senior High Schools	14
Career Centers	6
Special Education Facilities	5
Adult and Continuing Education Centers	3
Administrative Offices	2
Management Services	14
Other Property Involvements*	5
Total	199

*Includes leased properties.

The average buildings owned by the D.C. school system is approximately 50 years old. (See Figure V-1.) The fact that the city's schools are so old means that the system must devote a significant amount of time to repair and rehabilitation. Maintaining older buildings is very expensive because of the need to replace and/or upgrade major building subsystems (e.g. plumbing, heating, and electrical), as well as the requirement that buildings meet modern health and safety codes.

The Committee examined the value of the facilities owned by the school system. The total assessed value exceeds $900 million. Market value exceeds that amount, although in most cases there are no significant differences between market and assessed value. Several facilities have very high assessed values (i.e., greater than $10 million), primarily because of the commercial potential of their downtown locations.

FIGURE V-1
DISTRIBUTION OF FACILITIES BY YEAR BUILT



Source: D.C. Public Schools.

(2.) A "Typical School" in the District of Columbia

Although the Committee recognizes that every building is unique, it wishes to describe the characteristics of typical school buildings to provide a context for our recommendations.

The typical D.C. elementary school is housed in a two- or three-story brick building constructed in the 1940s with a newer addition. It is set in a schoolyard with a blacktop play surface, containing a number of holes and crevices, surrounded by a cyclone fence and a few patches of bare ground. For 400 students, there are several pieces of old-fashioned playground equipment, some of it in need of repair, and 2 or 3 basketball hoops. Metal guards cover all the ground floor windows.

Inside the building has the traditional layout with classrooms lining both sides of a corridor. In addition to the classrooms and a small main office, the building contains a library; a multi-purpose room that is used for lunch, assemblies, and physical education; a schoolwide computer laboratory with 15 computers; a Chapter I computer laboratory for students performing below grade level; offices for staff members not permanently assigned to the building (e.g., foreign language or art teachers); a small teachers' lounge; and a small book and supply room. The school was scheduled to receive a Writing-to-Read computer laboratory next year, but will not for lack of funds.

The surroundings are plain but clean, with tidy bulletin boards in the halls and classrooms lined with teacher displays, student work, and progress figures. Some serious structural problems affect the building, however: the roof has been leaking in several place for a number of years; plaster is falling or threatening to fall in several rooms and hallways; several windows are nailed in places because the frames are too deteriorated to hold them; a number of outer doors no longer fit their frames because door or frame (or both) are rotted, and one or two are secured with chains or boards. Several fire doors are missing, and several of the classroom doors cannot be locked because of deterioration. It is either too hot or too cold, and the temperature may vary in different parts of the building because of control problems with the heating system. Hallways and classrooms were last painted eight years ago. Two or three water fountains are out of order. In the bathrooms a number of stall doors are missing, one or two toilets are nonfunctional, there are periodically pools of water on the floor, and several water taps drip constantly. The addition is newer, but in the same shape.

The typical junior high school building was erected about 1950 and houses 600 students on 3 floors spreading out over several wings. The grounds include a playing field and some basketball hoops but no track or seating. Inside are classrooms, a schoolwide computer laboratory with 20 computers, a Chapter I computer laboratory, library, cafeteria, auditorium, and gym.

The halls display posters, a trophy case, the honor roll, attendance banners, and campaign signs for the student council. The building is clean, but like the elementary school, characteristics of a typical junior high include: a leaking roof, plaster falling here and there, doors and door frames in a state of deterioration inside and out, rotted window frames, and a need for paint, plumbing, and electrical work. There are not enough lockers for every student and a number of the lockers are unusable. A new science laboratory has just been installed, but equipment is limited. The shop is old and poorly equipped. In the gym, floor boards are worn, buckling or otherwise in need of work, and functioning showers and gym lockers are in short supply.

The typical senior high school is a three-story building occupying a city block that was built in 1935. It houses 1,300 students. The grounds include playing fields, which

are uneven, unlighted and poorly drained, a cinder track—considered unuseable—and stadium seating with splintering wooden boards and crumbling cement steps. Inside are dozens of classrooms, a library, cafeteria, auditorium, armory, gym, and 2 computer laboratories, with 20 computers apiece, 1 of which is used for word processing classes. Some sections of the building have been renovated, but most of it reflects more than 50 years of wear and tear.

The building is neat and clean, with trophy and display cases, plaques, and student honors lists outside the office and bulletin board displays and posters in the classrooms. Like the junior high school, the typical senior high suffers from a lack of maintenance. The roof leaks in a number of places, and as a result plaster is crumbling. Floorboards and tiles are chipped and broken, door and window frames are rotted, and outer doors do not close properly. The electrical system, the plumbing, and the bathrooms generally are antiquated. Some stall doors in the bathrooms are missing. Some science labs and shops date from their original installation, while others are new but are short on basic materials and equipment. New lockers were installed a few years ago and there are now enough for every student. The gym floor needs refinishing; gym lockers are damaged; washers, dryers, whirlpools, water fountains, shower mixing valves, and a number of pieces of sports equipment are not in good repair; gym bleachers are not anchored.

The library is run by two librarians and an aide. The library also maintains the school's collection of audiovisual equipment but one third of it is broken and awaiting repair by the system's only repairman, a process consuming months. Although there has been talk of utilizing closed circuit and instructional television, little of this technology is used, in part because of lack of equipment and because of limitations of the building's electrical system.

(3.) Capacity of the School System

The school system maintains capacity data for all of its schools; it is currently in the process of updating capacity estimates through detailed school-by-school reviews. The Committee believes that this updating is important for planning purposes, commends the school system for this action, and urges that the effort be speeded up.

Historically, the very substantial decline in overall enrollment was not accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the number of schools (see Table V-2.)

Table V-2.
Number of schools and enrollment for select years.

	Number of schools*	Enrollment
1960	174	122,800
1970	193	146,224
1980	184	100,049
1988	178	87,700
Percent Change 1970-88:	-8 percent	-40 percent

* Reflects buildings showing enrollment in historical tables produced by the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Current enrollment and capacity data indicate that the school system has excess capacity at the elementary and junior high levels, and a sufficient number of senior high schools. Table V-3 shows current enrollment and student capacity. In addition, the school system estimates program capacity, which is an adjustment made to estimate capacity more closely tied to the particular programs and configurations of

Table V-3.
Current enrollment and capacity of elementary junior, and senior high schools.

Type of School	1988 Enrollment*	Student Capacity	Occupancy Rate (%)
Elementary Schools	50,740	73,142	69%
Middle/Junior High Schools	2,950	5,028	59%
Junior High Schools	13,680	23,441	58%
Senior High Schools	16,853	17,438	97%

* Adjusted to correspond with specific buildings and capacity.
Sources: Building Base Data, District of Columbia Public Schools; Enrollment Data, Division of Quality Assurance (adj.).

individual schools. In general, program capacity adds between 5 and 20 percent to the student occupancy rates listed below, with the largest increases being at the elementary level.

Compared with school systems in the surrounding jurisdictions and to other urban school systems, the District has fewer students per campus (see Figure V-2).

With respect to future enrollment, current data suggest that the school population should remain relatively stable.

According to Census Bureau and D.C. Planning Office projections, total population in the District of Columbia in the year 2000 should be about the same as in 1980—638,000. Figure V-3 shows population projections through the year 2010.

School enrollment projections are consistent with the overall population trends, with some growth anticipated due to a somewhat larger number of individuals of child rearing age.

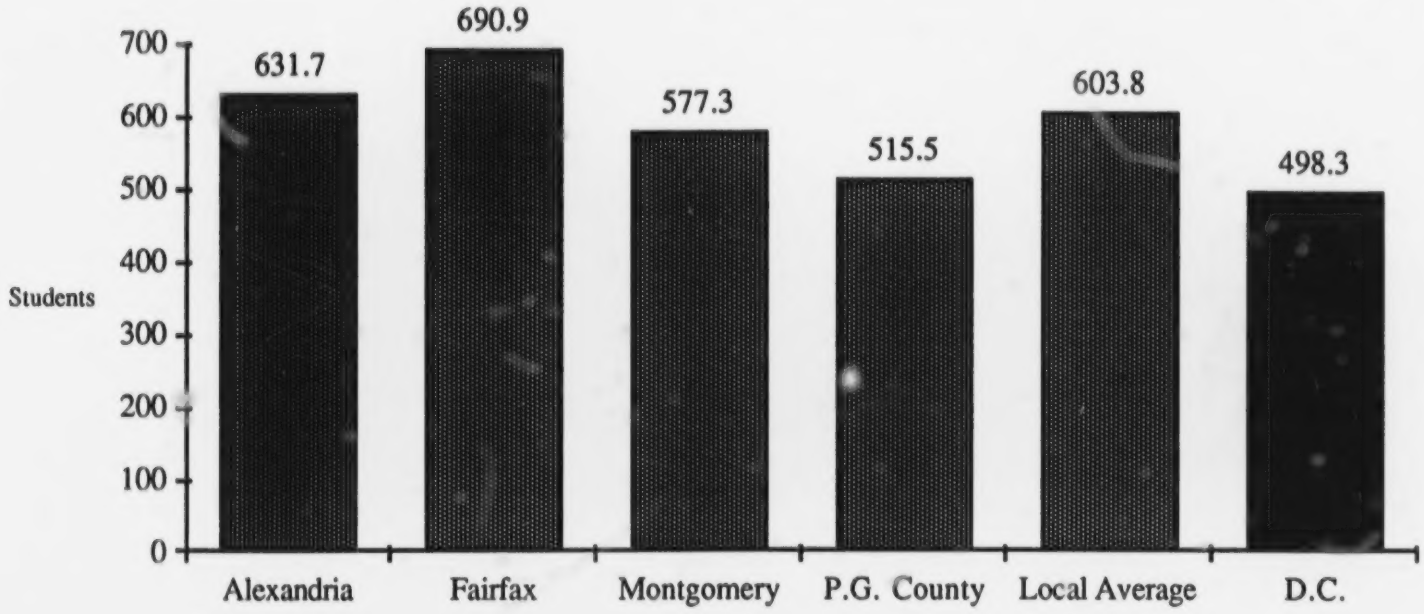
The following figure (V-4) shows projected enrollment trends for the elementary and secondary levels (both junior and senior high) for the next 20 years.

Admittedly, there could be some fluctuation in the enrollment numbers, depending in part on the success of schools. Good schools will attract more students and reduce dropout rates. However, even when one takes into account the possibility of growth in enrollment above current projections due to declines in the dropout rate, fewer students attending private schools, fewer dropouts and growth in pre-K programs, the school system will continue to have excess capacity for the immediate future and over the long-term as well.

The above suggest that:

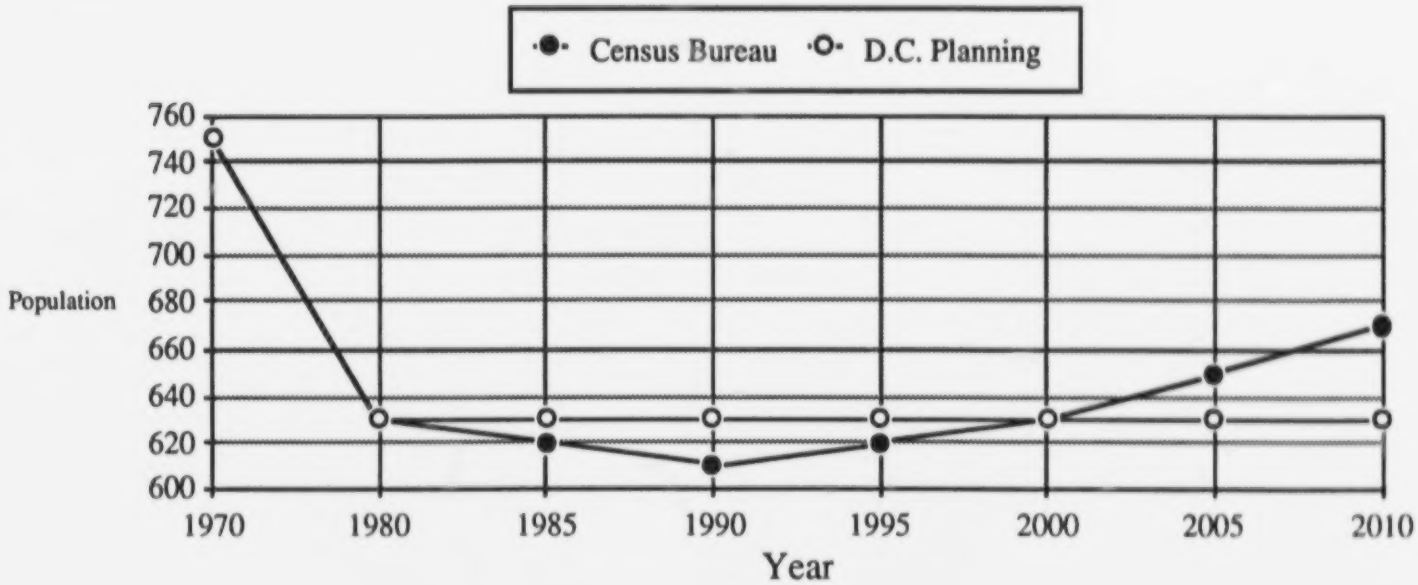
(1) There will be some excess capacity at the elementary and junior high level for the next 20 years, even if the school system is successful in attracting greater numbers of students from private schools and increasing pre-K enrollment. (Admittedly, there are some crowded elementary schools that face

FIGURE V-2
AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER CAMPUS
D.C. VERSUS SUBURBAN JURISDICTIONS



Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE V-3
D.C. POPULATION PROJECTIONS
(In Thousands)



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and
D.C. Planning Office.

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FIGURE V-4a
ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS
Public and Non-Public 1985-2010

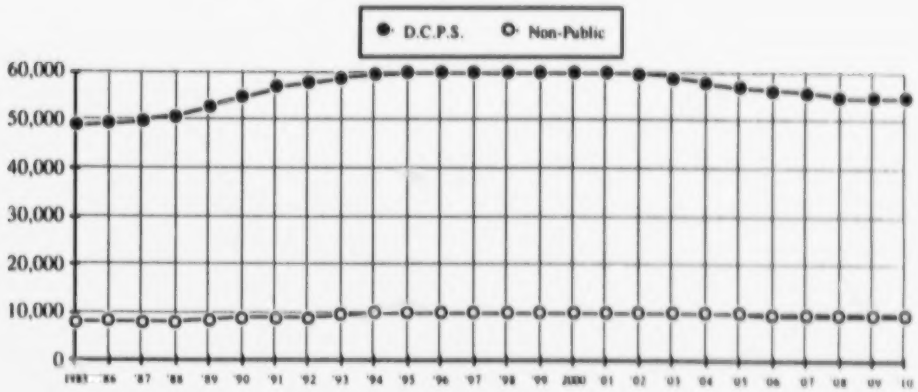
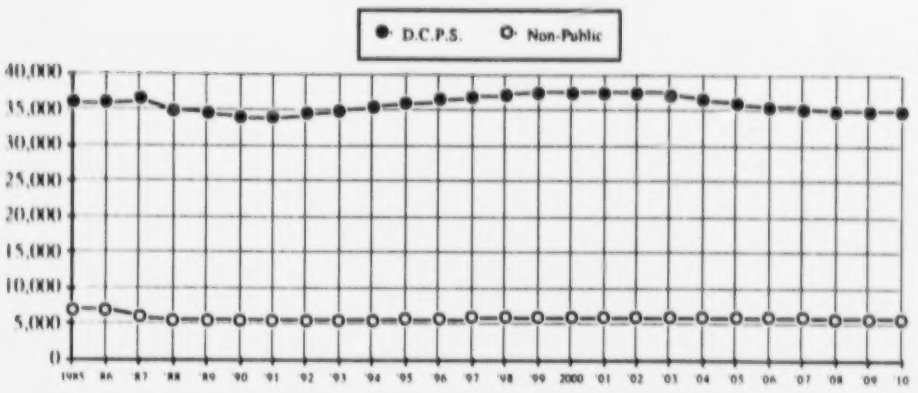


FIGURE V-4b
SECONDARY ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS
Public and Non-Public 1985-2010



Source: Report by Dr. Judith Jones.

significant enrollment pressures. However, in the aggregate, there will be excess capacity in those areas experiencing low growth in the overall student population.)

(2) At the senior high level, there will be sufficient capacity unless the school system is successful in reducing the dropout rates. If dropout rates are reduced significantly, there is a possibility that enrollment could exceed capacity over the next decade. The school system should monitor this trend carefully to determine facilities shifts that may be necessary.

The Committee believes that based upon enrollment projections, and the need to replace facilities with new buildings to take advantage of the benefits of modern design and technology, and the need to develop a plan to house administrative units in the school system, it is possible to consolidate and dispose of a few facilities at the elementary and junior level as well as non-school buildings without adversely affecting the overall program. At the senior high level, the Committee believes that there are no significant opportunities for consolidation. In addition, more appropriate use of space can be made throughout the 1990s by consolidating administrative offices in the junior high schools, where the current occupancy rate is less than 60 percent.

(4.) Condition of the Facilities

The Committee believes that the overall condition of the facilities (including structural and mechanical systems, and the grounds) is poor. In the aggregate, the Committee estimates the immediate backlog in deferred maintenance to be approximately $150 million.

As noted in the description of the typical elementary, junior, and senior high school, there are major problems attributable to deferred maintenance. These problems are not unknown to the school system; both building level and central office personnel recognize the needs.

The Committee identified four categories of deficiencies: structural, mechanical, electrical, and problems relating to the grounds.

Among the most common structural problems identified are: leaking roofs; ceilings and walls showing significant water damage and crumbling plaster; buckling floors; windows whose frames have rotted and are not functioning; exterior doors that are chained or boarded and do not work; interior doors whose locks do not function; missing fire doors; and walls and ceilings that require painting.

Mechanical problems include: air conditioning systems that do not function; heating systems whose controls do not function properly so that buildings are either too cold or too hot; plumbing systems that require significant upgrading; bathrooms with missing partitions; water fountains that do not work; clocks and bell systems that do not function; and security systems that are not working.

In general all the electrical systems require upgrading.

Concerning grounds, the Committee found holes in exterior fences; playgrounds that lack equipment; and lighting that either is inadequate or does not work.

(e.) Management of school facilities

The Committee reached four major conclusions concerning the maintenance system.

First, despite the well-meaning efforts of a number of hard working individuals, the current maintenance system does not function. Everyone the Committee spoke with echoed this conclusion.

The Committee began by reviewing the repair procedures. A principal or school level official fills out a request for work and

submits it to the central office. By and large, the work that is performed is neither timely nor of sufficient quality to prevent future problems.

The problems with the system are severe. The Committee asked for a print-out of all workorders over the past three years, and whether they were completed. The Committee took those workorders along on the school visits. It found that less than one-fifth of the workorders were completed (some were duplicate submissions), and that while the average response time for those that were done was somewhere between three to six months, a significant number took years. Figure V-5 summarizes these results.

Second, in addition to problems with performing repairs, the Committee found that many schools lack basic, critical materials and equipment. The Committee visited many schools that did not have: soap and detergent in the bathrooms, paper hand towels, washers to repair faucets, light bulbs, paint, buffers and scrubbers, wax and floor strippers, small hand tools to make repairs; and a high lift to install light bulbs. The current supply and distribution process is simply not getting materials and equipment to schools in a timely fashion.

The Committee's third conclusion is that there is a wide variation in the cost of operating schools. The school system compiles data concerning operating cost per student. Table V-4 shows the wide variation in these costs.

Based upon this review, as well as its examination of the school system's data, the Committee concluded that the large variation primarily reflects differences in occupancy rates. Where there are fewer students, the costs to maintain facilities for them are significant.

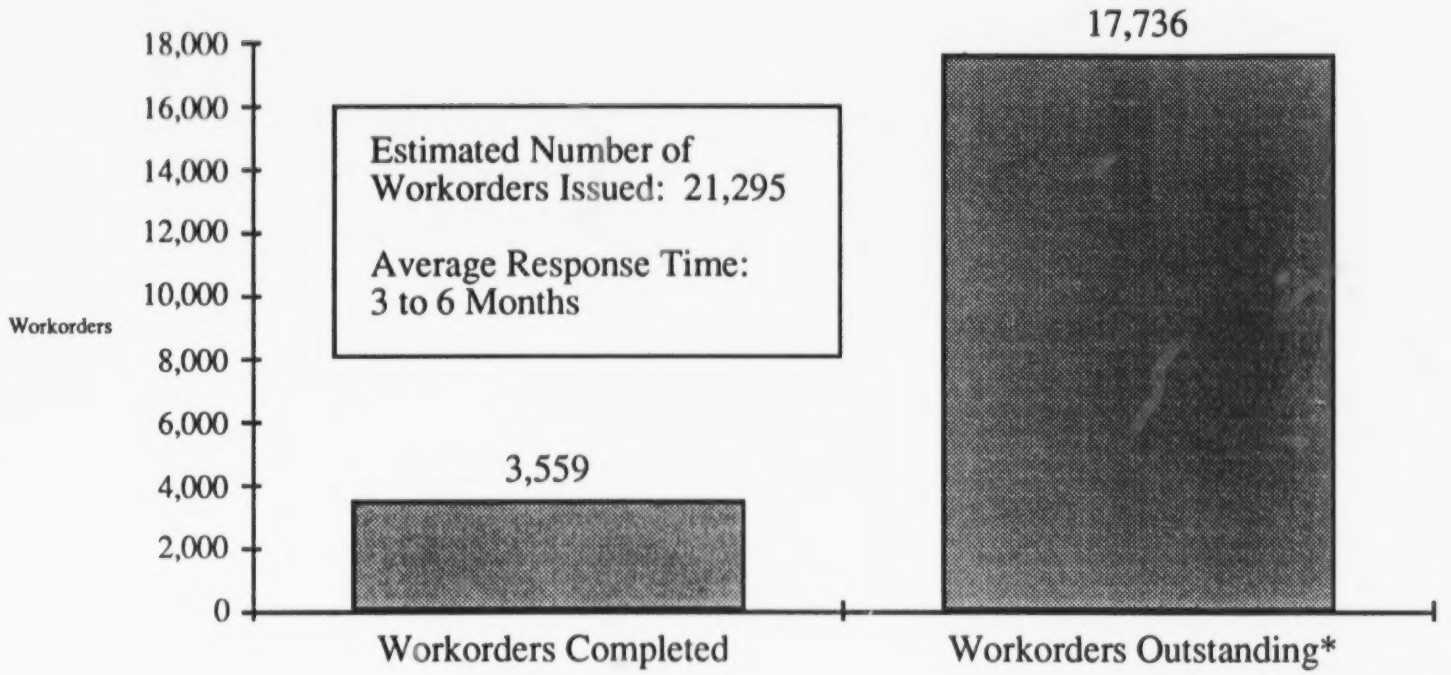
Fourth, the Committee found that the former organizational structure, which is now being revised, had organizations and individuals with overlapping functions and responsibilities. Accountability within the system was not well established.

Table V-4.
Low and high operating costs per student by type of school.

Type of School	Low Cost per Student	High Cost per Student
Elementary	$ 243	$ 1,117
Junior High School	388	1,350
Senior High School	302	1,477

Source: Building Base Data Fiscal Year 1987, District of Columbia Public Schools.

FIGURE V-5
WORKORDERS ISSUED 1986-1989



* Unknown number of duplicates.

Source: D.C. Public School System.

(D.) A DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(1.) A Small But Important First Step

By September 1989, the school system should provide all schools either with the necessary funds or sufficient supplies to handle ordinary routine building maintenance—soap/detergent, floor wax/stripper, light bulbs, faucet washers, paper hand towels, etc. This action alone will have an immediate positive impact on school morale and operations.

(2.) A More Ambitious Facilities Improvement Plan

Based upon its findings, the Committee believes that a three- to five-year plan can be put in place to bring most existing facilities to a reasonable state of repair and to eliminate the problems associated with deferred maintenance. As part of this plan, not every building will be repaired. Some should be disposed of; others might be consolidated.

A key element of this plan is to establish clear priorities among the repair tasks. The Committee has identified significant building integrity and life safety issues that need to be addressed. They include leaking roofs, problems with fire alarm systems, exterior doors that are inoperable, and isolated cases of other life safety problems.

As these critical repairs are made, a school-by-school plan should be developed that begins with high-priority items and leads to the completion of all repairs within five years. In general, on a school-by-school basis, repairs must be made to: windows, interior doors, ceilings, mechanical and electrical systems, air conditioning and heating, and walls and floors. Finally, there is also a need to repaint, both inside and outside, repair clocks and bells, provide adequate playgrounds and sports equipment, and conduct routine maintenance.

The Committee estimates the total cost of conducting these needed repairs upgrading all facilities to be $150 million.

(3.) A Revised Management and Organization Structure to Carry Out the Plan

Given the number and scope of the repair needs and the difficulties experienced under the current system in performing work of this magnitude in a timely and efficient manner, the Committee recommends a series of changes to the existing management and organizational structure.

The Committee recommends a small central staff that would be responsible for: planning, carrying out operations, managing capital projects, and providing whatever financial and administrative support is required. The organizational structure should mirror these functions. The recommended management structure assumes the implementation of the five-year facilities plan described above.

Planning is essential. The Committee does not believe that the school system currently devotes sufficient effort to planning its facilities program. In particular, there is a need to integrate educational requirements and programs with facilities planning. The school system has recently initiated a system to facilitate such planning, and the Committee commends this action.

To improve operations, the school system should have a certified, qualified, on-site operating engineer in every junior high school, senior high school, and large elementary school within the city. Clusters of smaller elementary schools should be served by a single engineer. The engineer

would report to property managers at the central office in order to carry out the technical aspects of his job, except under school-based management, the engineer would report directly to the principal regarding minor repairs. (Note: The Committee is not recommending any change in the reporting relationships of custodians and other maintenance personnel; it supports the decision of the Superintendent to have these individuals report to the principal.) The engineer would have the responsibility, authority, and resources to perform directly all functions typically performed by an operating engineer. This individual would also: help supervise any other school-based staff involved in carrying out maintenance functions, identify routine repair work of a minor nature that needs to be performed through established contracts and request such work under the authority of the principal, supervise the performance of such work and authorize payment (with the principal), and help identify major repair items for action by the central office.

Second, the school system should shift, for the short-term, all existing employees in the central office who perform direct maintenance and repair functions (e.g., plumbers, carpenters) to the schools. Such employees would report directly to central office management and would be in a particular school for a specified period until the agreed-upon work was completed. When an individual, or team of individuals, completes assignments in that particular building, the central office would assign them to another school. Over time, the operational functions performed at the central level should be shifted to contractors, with the central office maintaining a small core staff of trained professionals. Essential to this staff is a group of property managers (approximately seven to eight) who would be responsible for managing repair activities in clusters of schools. These property managers would monitor performance of building engineers, provide quality control over contract operations, and ensure that facilities are maintained in good order.

The central office staff should also have a small organization with particular responsibility for major capital improvements. The responsibility of this organization would be to: monitor the overall assets within the system; identify major repair requirements and contract out those responsibilities, including all design functions; and ensure the delivery of task order contracts.

The finance and administration organization would provide necessary support.

The Committee believes that, over time, these changes will produce a smaller, more efficient organization that relies heavily on school-based expertise, contractual support, and central system monitoring to carry out maintenance and repair functions.

The school system would also have to put in place the following procedural changes to the overall repair and alteration program:

- Establish a budget and a dollar ceiling for minor repairs and alterations to be carried out at the school building level.
- Utilize task order AE (architectural and engineering) contracts to obtain technical experts on retainer who can provide the school system with technical expertise when needed for complicated repairs and alterations.
- Utilize indefinite-quantity construction contracts to have construction contractors on retainer for basic repairs.
- Provide principals with task order authority up to a dollar threshold limitation to order basic repairs and replacement from task order contracts.
- Utilize task order AEs on more complicated work to develop statements of work for indefinite quantity contractors to provide service.

(4.) Establish a Nonprofit Support Organization

When the Committee met with school system personnel, they said that a repair and maintenance program of the magnitude envisioned, in the timeframes described, could not be carried out effectively by the central office. They expressed the need for outside assistance to carry out the project. If such assistance is not available, in their view central staff will have to be strengthened over a period of years, and as a result full implementation of the plan will take a number of additional years.

The Committee recommends setting up, in addition to the new D.C. Public Education Committee described in the previous section, a facilities organization that will assist in the implementation of the above changes. The Committee sees the facility organization's role as:

- Assisting the central office in overall asset management;
- Providing technical assistance, training, advice, and support to the school system;
- Assisting in the implementation of the five-year maintenance improvement plan by monitoring design and construction contracts; and
- If found to be legal, feasible, and beneficial, serving as the repository for funds from disposals, as well as other funds, from which certain repairs could be carried out subject to agreed-upon guidelines.

The organization could be funded by a combination of public and private sources, including funds from the disposal of certain assets.

(5.) Funding the Plan: Consolidation and Disposal Opportunities

Based upon the Committee's findings, the Committee believes that there is a significant opportunity to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance by disposing of certain facilities (estimated value—$50 million), and consolidating others (estimated annual operational savings—$3 million to $5 million).

The Committee believes strongly that all capital from the disposal of facilities must be used to carry out the ambitious facilities improvement plan described above, and that all operational savings must support teaching and learning activities in the schools.

The Committee agrees to work with the Board of Education, within its designated procedures for the closing of schools and/or the sale of assets, to help achieve these significant opportunities to generate resources for the support of the school system. Parents and others must be involved in these discussions. The Committee will identify the buildings for the Board of Education and work with them as appropriate. The identified buildings/schools will have one or more of the following characteristics: a number of out-of-boundary students who can attend schools elsewhere; nearby neighborhood schools; low occupancy; high operating cost; significant asset value that could be used for repair activities; and a non-school use that can be relocated to another facility.

The Committee fully recognizes that those disposals or consolidations involving school buildings, as opposed to facilities without students, will be difficult to achieve because of the often deeply felt attachments of parents and students to individual programs—not to the buildings themselves, but to what goes on inside. The Committee rec-

ognizes the need to provide sound education programs in different facilities in every case where a building may be closed. But the reality is that the school system is incurring extraordinarily high operating costs for some of its underutilized elementary and junior high schools. It is also clear that by divesting itself of several particularly valuable assets, the school system could generate substantial revenue that could be used to repair and rehabilitate schools throughout the city. The Committee also agrees that the particular needs of students and parents enrolled in any building identified for disposal must be met, and that the school system should take appropriate action to do so.

As discussed under governance, a legislative change must occur to allow the school system to retain any funds that result from the disposal of assets.

(6.) A Plan for Security

As the Committee was conducting its assessment, the Superintendent of Schools announced a number of initiatives to improve security in the public schools. The Committee fully endorses these actions.

In addition, the Committee notes that the facilities improvements planned over the next several years, as described above, will greatly strengthen security. As exterior lighting is replaced, as exit and entrance doors are replaced and equipped with appropriate locks, as fences are repaired, and as buildings are upgraded, security for students and teachers will improve.

Finally, the Committee notes the need for periodic risk assessments in order to determine additional action that may be required. The Committee recommends that building-by-building assessments be conducted, and that future security improvements be a direct response to those assessments. The Committee does not support across-the-board, equal treatment for all schools. Instead, it believes that the security effort should respond directly to the risks that are identified on a school-by-school basis.

A Summary of the Recommendations

21. The school system should engage in a five-year modernization program to eliminate the backlog in deferred maintenance and repairs at an estimated cost of $150 million. In addition, the Committee recommends allocating an estimated $30 million for air conditioning for the summer program.

22. To finance a significant portion of this repair effort, and to reduce the overall operating cost of the schools, the Committee recommends the disposal and/or consolidation of about 10 facilities through existing procedures established by the Board of Education. The Committee recommends that the Board set a target of $50 million to be realized through the sale of assets. The Committee recommends a legislative change to permit the Board to retain funds realized by the sale of properties, said funds to be used exclusively for the purpose of repairing and rehabilitating the system's buildings and grounds.

23. To accomplish an effective facilities maintenance program, the school system should: place greater authority and responsibility with the individual schools, use private sector resources to perform repairs through task order arrangements, and revise the operations of the central office. The central office should serve as a quality control function, oversee major repair projects, and carry out certain operations best performed by central maintenance crews, with the latter function being turned over to the private sector over time.

In addition, the community should consider, as part of establishing a new D.C. Committee on Public Education, the provision of assistance in carrying out the facilities improvement plan from the private sector. The exact role and responsibilities of a new organization in the area of facilities will need to be determined.

VI. FINANCING: HOW TO PAY FOR A BETTER SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Committee has reached three fundamental conclusions with respect to the budget for public education in the District of Columbia.

First, and paramount, the school system must become more efficient and better utilize existing resources, including streamlining operations and making maximum use of available assets. Such reforms should result in additional monies becoming available to promote teaching and learning. Further, these internal reforms are, in the Committee's judgment, a necessary precondition if the community and the Federal government are to agree to spend additional resources on public education. Hence, the Committee recommends a commitment to the reforms called for in the report, and the taking of the initial steps to implement them, as a precondition to additional resources.

Second, it is clear to the Committee that there are significant unmet needs in D.C. schools. The reforms and improvements that the Committee is recommending will result in a net increase in funds for public education. However, everyone should be aware that additional resources will be required if the significant improvements in education that the Committee has called for are to be realized.

Third, it is also clear that the District needs increased support from the Federal government for education, and that there is a need for the public school system to pursue such funding aggressively.

(A.) THE CURRENT BUDGET FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

(1.) Background Information

The 1990 budget request by the Board of Education for the school system totals approximately $571 million, of which $512 million is appropriated; the remainder comes primarily from Federal monies. In action on the budget request earlier this year, the Mayor and the City Council recommended an appropriated budget of $500.5 million, an increase of approximately $44 million above prior-year amounts. Currently, the budget awaits Congressional action. (For the purposes of this analysis and recommendations, the Committee took as the point of departure the budget originally submitted by the Board of Education.)

The school system has discretion over the use of its budget except for Federal aid, which must be used for specific purposes and for specific subcategories of students and instruction.

Personnel costs constitute more than 80 percent of the total budget; this is also true for school systems across the country.

(2.) Comparisons with Other School Districts

Comparisons of budgets and per pupil expenditures across school systems are extremely difficult. School systems generally do not use identical systems or bases for determining per pupil expenditures because of differing methods of accounting for such items as food service, transportation, debt service, pension payments, adult education, summer school, and tuition payments.

Peat Marwick Main & Co.'s analysis attempted to focus on a small number of districts—the jurisdictions surrounding the

District and nine major urban school systems—in order to make meaningful comparisons. In addition, Peat Marwick purposely excluded food service, transportation, and other items from the analysis and took into account differences in the cost of living among the cities they examined. The Committee chose these particular cities because of the evidence of progress being made in these areas.

Figures VI-1 and VI-2 show the results. The District spends about 13 percent less per pupil than the average per pupil expenditure in the five neighboring jurisdictions and 6 percent less than in the eight cities the Committee surveyed.

Hence, in the judgment of the Committee, one of the great myths that must be dispelled is that the D.C. school system spends significantly more than either surrounding jurisdictions or other urban school systems. One of the problems facing this system, quite frankly, is that the community is not devoting enough resources to education in light of the needs and requirements.

The Committee believes that these comparisons are the appropriate ones. Other comparisons, such as those that compare the District with average expenditures for an entire state, are, in the Committee's judgment, inappropriate; the state level data do not reflect differences in cost of living, and they include many rural areas and small towns, where costs for all public services, including schools, are lower than in urban areas.

Figure VI-3 shows that the other urban districts rely heavily on state funding for a significant portion of their operating costs.

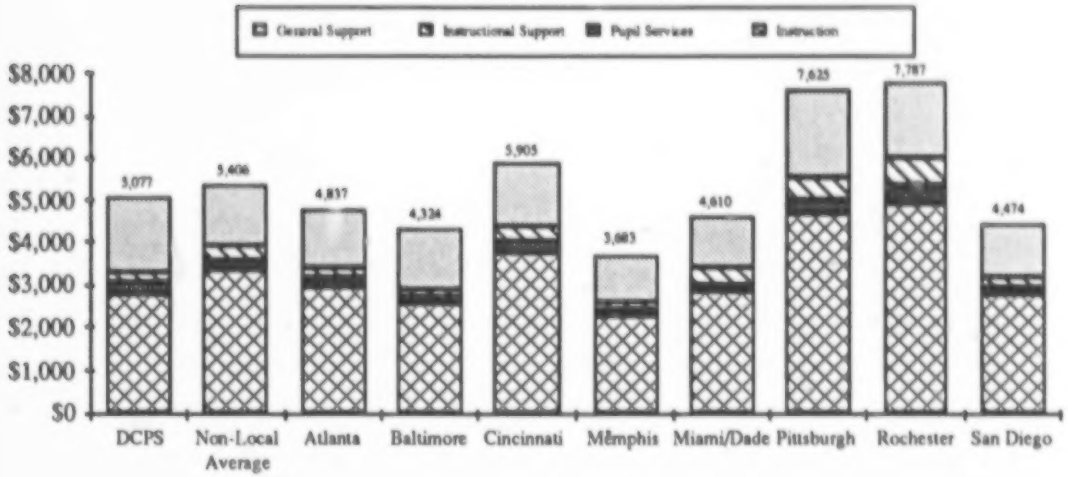
(3.) Comparison with the Budget for Other Agencies

Athough the District's budget for education has grown somewhat over the last several years, it has lagged far behind the growth in spending for other services (see Figure VI-4).

In the 1980s, when overall city expenditures increased more than 25 percent in constant dollars, most of the budget increase was in the areas of health and human services, criminal justice, and corrections.

Figure VI-5 shows public school appropriations (in constant dollars) over the last eight years in the District of Columbia. Although there has been some growth in spending, the Committee believes that spending has not kept pace with the needs of the school system.

FIGURE VI-1
ADJUSTED TOTAL EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL
IN NORMAL DOLLARS (Non-local)

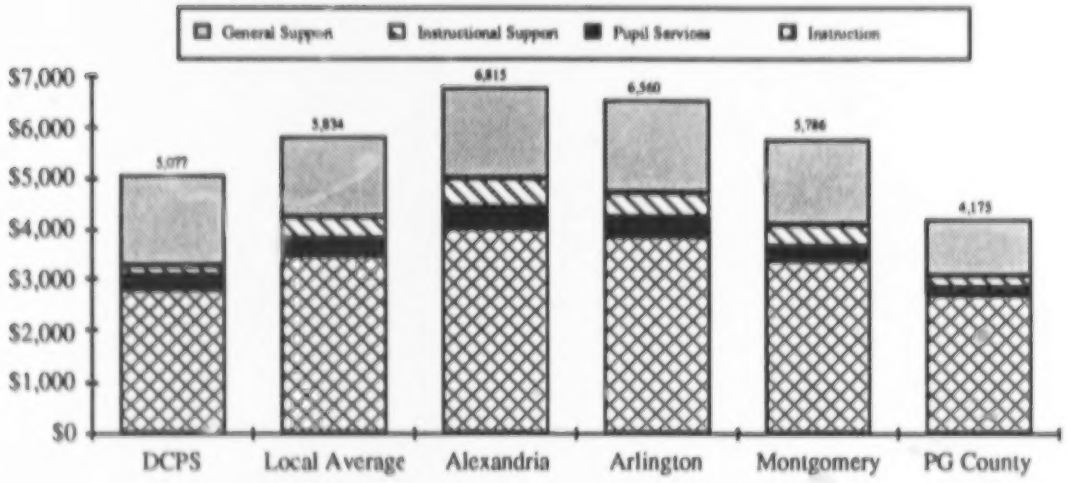


The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $329 less per pupil than the urban school districts on an adjusted basis (6% less than the average).

The expenditure levels were adjusted to exclude food service, transportation, contingency funds, capital equipment outlays, debt service, tax reserves, and state agency functions.

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE VI-2
ADJUSTED TOTAL EXPENDITURE COST PER PUPIL
IN NORMAL DOLLARS (Local)

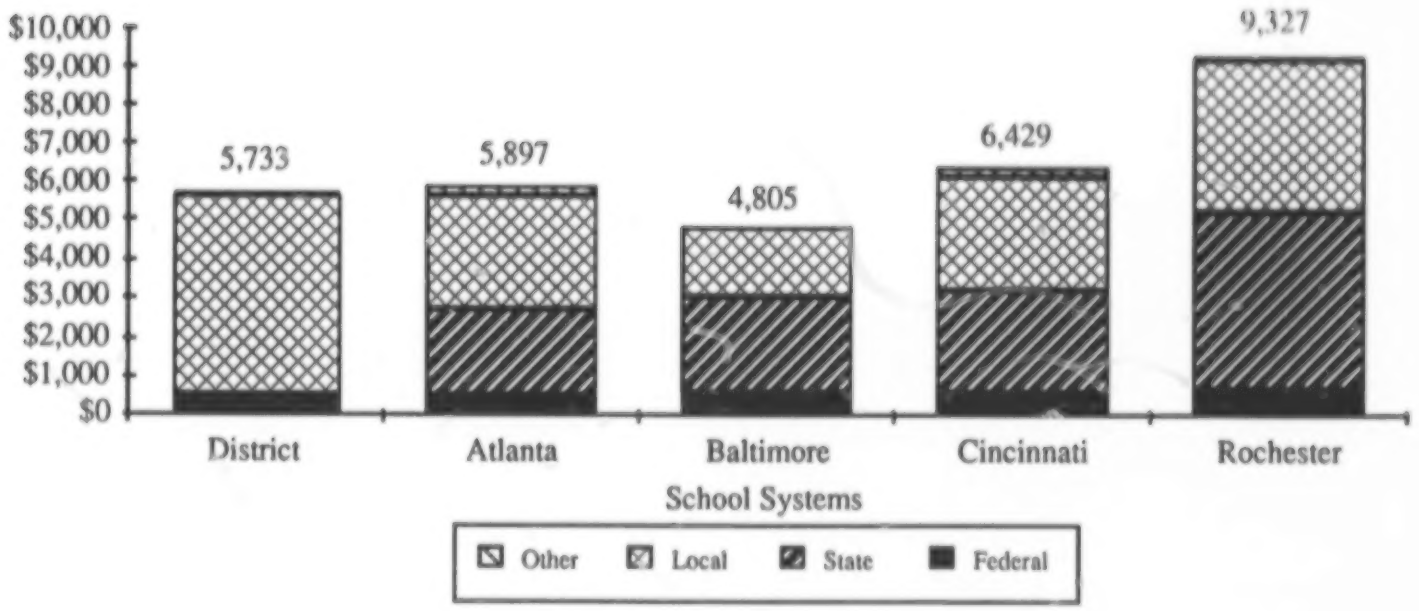


The D.C. Public School System spends approximately $757 less per pupil than other local school districts on an adjusted basis (13% less than the average).

The expenditure levels were adjusted to exclude food service, transportation, contingency funds, capital equipment outlays, debt service, tax reserves, and state agency functions.

Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE VI-3
REVENUE PER PUPIL BY SOURCE TYPE
Fiscal Year 1988-89 (In Normal Dollars*)

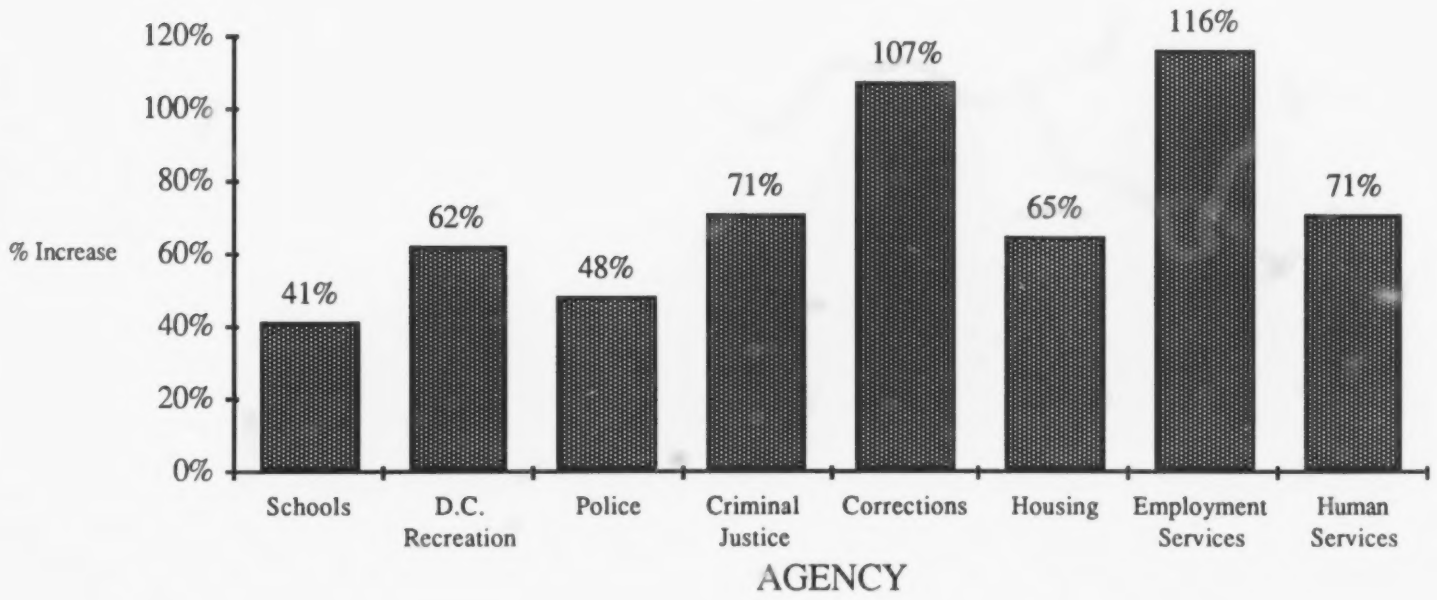


* Adjusted for cost of living.

Note: Excludes Food Services and Transportation Costs.

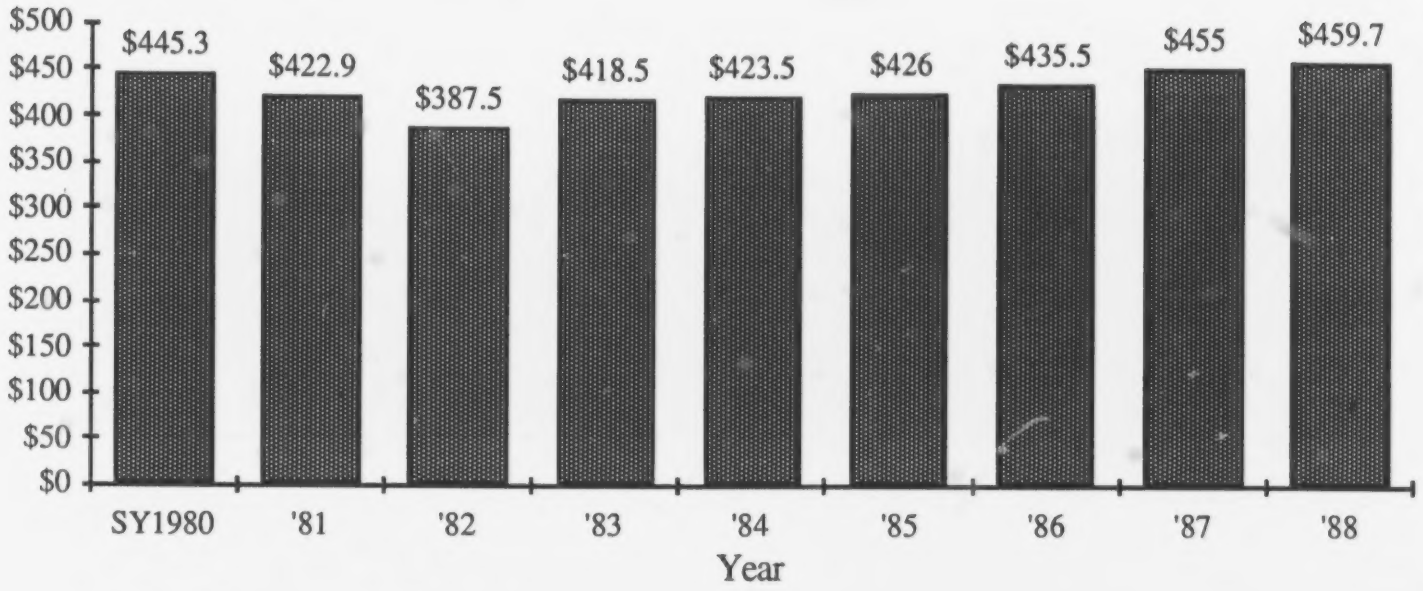
Source: Peat Marwick.

FIGURE VI-4
INCREASE IN SPENDING FOR MAJOR D.C. DEPARTMENTS
FY 1983 - FY 1988



Source: D.C. Budget

FIGURE VI-5
D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Appropriations (in millions)



* All figures are in 1988 constant dollars.

Source: D.C. Public Schools

(B.) COSTS OF THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Let us turn now to the financial effects of the Committee's proposals. Tables VI-1 through VI-4 summarize the estimated costs of the Committee's recommendations. In the aggregate, the Committee's proposals, when fully implemented:

1. Represent a 12 percent increase ($67 million in 1989 constant dollars) in the school system's annual operating budget. The increase results from:

- Increases of $82 million per year (1989 dollars) to implement the improvements called for in this package, plus
- Offsetting savings of $11 million per year from reductions in administrative overhead, streamlined operations, and the consolidation of facilities, plus
- Further offsets of $4 million per year from increases in certain anticipated categorical funding at the Federal level.

2. Represent a capital expenditure of approximately $180 million over 5 years, including:

- $150 million for basic repairs, and
- $30 million to provide air conditioning.

To finance these capital expenditures, the Committee anticipates ongoing city contributions of about $25 million per year for 5 years (this represents a continuation of the 1990 capital expenditures for the school system for the next 5 years), and receipts from the sale of school facilities of approximately $50 million.

All costs should be treated as planning figures, subject to implementation and detailed budget preparation.

The major cost items recommended by the Committee are:

1. Expansion of the school day and school year ($40 million when fully implemented in today's dollars);

2. Establishment of a career ladder and merit pay system for teachers ($23 million); and

3. Capital repairs of $150 million to overcome the backlog of deferred maintenance and put the facilities in good repair.

TABLE VI-1

DC COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

(IN MILLIONS)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994†
BASELINE BUDGET*	$571.0	$593.8	$617.6	$642.3	$668.0
NEW PROGRAMS	$2.0	$42.5	$60.5	$74.4	$100.3
COST SAVINGS	($2.0)	($6.0)	($9.0)	($12.0)	($13.5)
NEW FEDERAL FUNDING	$0.0	($3.5)	($4.5)	($4.5)	($4.5)
ADJUSTED BUDGET	$571.0	$626.8	$664.6	$700.2	$750.3
PERCENTAGE INCREASE	0.0%	5.6%	7.6%	9.0%	12.3%
DOLLAR INCREASE	$0.0	$33.0	$47.0	$57.9	$82.3

† Recommended programs are fully implemented by fiscal year 1994.

* See calculation of baseline budget on following page.

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

D.C. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

COMMITTEE'S DEVELOPMENT OF 1990 BASELINE BUDGET

	1990
MAYOR'S REQUEST	$500,600,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION ADDITIONAL REQUEST	$11,900,000
SUBTOTAL	$512,500,000
FEDERAL AND OTHER FUNDING	$58,500,000
TOTAL	$571,000,000

NOTE:
Baseline budgets for subsequent years are calculated by inflating the 1990 budget by 4% per year.

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
1990-1994 Baseline Budget	$571,000,000	$593,800,000	$617,600,000	$642,300,000	$668,000,000

TABLE VI-2

D.C. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

CAPITAL COSTS SUMMARY

(IN MILLIONS)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
NEW PROGRAMS	$25.0	$45.4	$40.0	$40.0	$30.0
REVENUE FROM DISPOSALS	$0.0	($35.0)	($15.0)	$0.0	$0.0
DC CAPITAL APPROPRIATION (TENTATIVE)	($25.0)	($25.0)	($25.0)	($25.4)	($30.0)
NET CASH (IN)/OUTFLOWS	$0.0	($14.6)	$0.0	$14.6	$0.0
CUMULATIVE CASH FLOW (IN)/OUT	$0.0	($14.6)	($14.6)	$0.0	$0.0

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

TABLE VI-3
DC COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION
ESTIMATED COST OF RECOMMENDATIONS
($ IN MILLIONS)

NUMBER†	RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION	FISCAL YEAR 1990	FISCAL YEAR 1991	FISCAL YEAR 1992	FISCAL YEAR 1993	FISCAL YEAR 1994	NOTES
3	A comprehensive, quality program for at-risk DC children aged 3-6	In order to achieve this goal, the committee recommends developing curricula, hiring various aids and specialists, providing funding for improving tuition subsidies, increasing teacher salaries, and working with the Mayor's Office on Early Childhood Development.	$0.5	$4.5 ($2.5)	$5.8 ($2.5)	$6.1 ($2.5)	$6.3 ($2.5)	Assumes $2.5 million in federal funding per year, beginning in fiscal year 1991.
4	Develop distinctive schools at the senior high school, junior high school and elementary school level	Schools will offer diverse programs based on curricula (performing arts, science, technology and math, communications, or visual arts) or on educational methods (Montessori).	$0.4	$1.1 ($1.0)	$2.4 ($2.0)	$3.7 ($2.0)	$5.1 ($2.0)	Assumes federal fund offset of $1.0 million in 1991 and $2.0 million in 1992 and all years thereafter.
5,6	Revitalize curricula and instruction	This recommendation covers a number of recommendations relating to curricula and instruction, increases in supplies, and additional counselors. This recommendation is scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 1990.	$0.5	$10.8	$8.9	$9.3	$7.4	
9	Open all schools from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM to provide for enrichment and remedial programs	Attendance during these extended hours is voluntary except for children requiring remediation. Assumes that approximately 50% of total students will participate. The extended day program for voluntarily attending elementary and junior high school students will involve: • hobby activities • art, music and crafts • sports • other enrichment activities The extended day program for voluntarily attending senior high school students will involve a study hall in the morning and athletic or other extra-curricula activities in the afternoon. This recommendation will be implemented in fiscal year 1992.	$0.0	$0.0	$12.1	$12.7	$13.3	

† As shown in summary recommendations.

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

TABLE VI-3 (continued)

NUMBER	RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION	FISCAL YEAR 1990	FISCAL YEAR 1991	FISCAL YEAR 1992	FISCAL YEAR 1993	FISCAL YEAR 1994	NOTES
10	Expand the school year from 180 days to 200 days and eventually to 220 days	The extended school year will be optional except for students requiring remedial instruction. Assumes that approximately 50% of total students will participate when fully implemented. The additional 20 or 40 days will be used for academic or recreational activities. During the first half of the day, voluntarily attending students will participate in a computer camp, a language camp, or go on museum, science or nature trips. Remedial students will receive academic instruction. During the second half of the day, all students will participate in sports and/or recreational activities. The 200 day school year is scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 1990. The 220 day school year will begin in fiscal year 1994.	$0.5	$3.2 $10.0	$5.8 $10.0	$12.4 $10.0	$24.8	Teacher salary component omitted. See recommendation II.2 for calculation. The capital cost of air conditioning the buildings used is included, and is estimated to be $30.0 million, incurred evenly over fiscal years 1990, 1991 and 1992.
11	Revitalize the interscholastic sports program	This recommendation includes upgrading coaches' salaries to levels comparable with surrounding communities, ensuring that the type and amount of equipment needed is available and in good working order and improving the condition of the required playing fields.	$0.0	$2.7 $0.4	$2.8	$2.9	$3.0	Includes capital costs of $0.4 million in 1991.
12.1	Adopt a merit pay plan by school	If the school exceeds its targeted goal, all employees (teachers, adminstrators, custodians, secretaries, etc.) in the school receive a bonus of $2,000. This recommendation is scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 1990.	$0.0	$5.7	$5.9	$6.1	$6.3	
12.2	Offer 12 month contracts to teachers	Teachers may voluntarily enter into a 12 month contract. This recommendation will be introduced in fiscal year 1990 and is scheduled to be fully operational in fiscal year 1994.	$0.1	$1.2	$2.5	$5.2	$10.7	

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

NUMBER	RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION	FISCAL YEAR 1990	FISCAL YEAR 1991	FISCAL YEAR 1992	FISCAL YEAR 1993	FISCAL YEAR 1994	NOTES
12.3	Introduce a career ladder program for teachers	The following five tier teacher hierarchy is proposed: • Teacher I • Teacher II • Teacher III • Master Teacher • Instructional Team Leader This recommendation will be introduced in fiscal year 1991 but full conversion will not occur until fiscal year 1994.	$0.0	$12.1	$13.0	$14.6	$21.9	
12.4	Offer $2,000 more per year in base salary to individuals teaching subjects that have been traditionally harder to fill	Starting salaries for individuals teaching math, science or other subjects for which there has been a shortage of teachers will be offered $2,000 more per year. This recommendation is scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 1991.	$0.0	$0.1	$0.2	$0.3	$0.4	
18	Increase principal and senior high school assistant principals salaries by $5,000 per year	All school principals and the assistant principals at the senior high schools will be given a one time base salary increase of $5,000. This recommendation is scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 1991.	$0.0	$1.1	$1.1	$1.1	$1.1	
21	Make the necessary capital repairs including deferred maintenance and improvements as identified by the Facilities Sub-Committee	The Facilities Sub-Committee has identified $150,000,000 worth of necessary capital improvements. The Sub-Committee has also determined that proposed building disposals will result in revenue of $50,000,000.	$25.0	$35.0 ($35.0)	$30.0 ($15.0)	$30.0	$30.0	The annual $30.0 million represents capital outlays for improvements. The ($35.0 million) and the ($15.0 million) represent disposal revenues.

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

TABLE VI-4
SUMMARY OF COST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

	FISCAL YEAR 1990	FISCAL YEAR 1991	FISCAL YEAR 1992	FISCAL YEAR 1993	FISCAL YEAR 1994
OPERATING COSTS	$2.0	$42.5	$60.5	$74.4	$100.3
FEDERAL CATEGORICAL FUNDING	$0.0	($3.5)	($4.5)	($4.5)	($4.5)
CAPITAL COSTS (net of disposal revenues)	$25.0	$10.4	$25.0	$40.0	$30.0

Source: D.C. Committee on Public Education

(C.) FINANCING THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommending, first, that the improvements called for in this report be financed from the savings realized by streamlining and disposing of assets at public auction.

Subsequently, in the Committee's judgment, the Federal government and the city should share in financing the incremental operating costs of these improvements.

(1.) The Federal Share

After the management savings are used to offset the costs of the Committee's recommendations, then the recommended Federal share of the cost of the increase is 50 percent, or approximately $33 million (1989 dollars) per year.

The Committee notes that the Federal payment to the District has declined significantly over the past several years. The Federal payment is an amount provided by Congress annually since 1800 in recognition of the extraordinary costs and tax revenue losses incurred by the District government because of the Federal presence. The District provides municipal services such as fire and police protection to Federal agencies, diplomatic installations, and organizations dealing exclusively with the Federal government, none of which pays taxes.

Special costs arise from, for example, security services, ceremonial functions, demonstrations, and other activities associated with the Federal government. Tax revenues are forgone from all Federally owned property, from foreign government property, from the government and nonprofit sectors of the District's economy that pay no business taxes, and from Federal restrictions not imposed on other municipalities (e.g., the prohibition of a commuter tax).

Further, the Federal payment does not fully recognize, in the Committee's judgment, the unique status of the District. Many cities benefit significantly from tax income related to those who work in the city but live in other jurisdictions. The District cannot so benefit, and the Federal government should recognize this constraint.

As the following table shows, the Federal government's payment has declined between 1987 and 1989 by $35 million in real dollars, or from more than 19 percent of the city's budget to approximately 16 percent.

Table VI-5.
Federal Payment.

Year	Real Dollars	Constant 1985 Dollars
1985	$425	$425
1986	$412	$396
1987	$480	$444
1988	$460	$408
1989	$445	$380

The significant decline in Federal support comes at a time, the Committee notes, when the District faces severe spending and revenue constraints. Accordingly, the Committee believes that the Federal government should significantly increase the resources it provides to the District, and that these resources can, and should, be directed to education.

The Committee recognizes fully that the Federal payment is non-categorical, and that complete discretion must exist within the city government concerning the allocation of these resources. It notes, however, two available means of dedicating monies under the Federal payment. First, Congress

may choose to appropriate amounts for education as part of its review of the District's budget. Such action has precedent, and would represent a Federal investment in the District's youth that is part of a long-range solution to the problems of drugs and crime. Such an action would involve additional Federal monies, and not a reallocation of the city's funds. Second, Congress could increase the Federal payment on the basis of an understanding with the political leadership of the District that these monies would be spent for education. Either method apparently protects the District's rightful autonomy with respect to the Federal payment.

(2.) The District's Share

The Committee also recommends that the District increase its financial support for education at the elementary and secondary levels. The District's share of the annual operating increase, approximately $33 million (1989 dollars), represents only about 1 percent of the total District's budget.

Even with the overall budget increase for education called for in this report, the growth in the education budget will remain less than that of virtually every other department in the city.

Using the District's own revenue and budget estimates, the Committee projects that the effect of its proposals would be to increase the education's share of the total D.C. budget by one-half of 1 percent.

The Committee believes that the additional funds from the city can be obtained within existing revenues. However, if the Mayor and the City Council determine that additional taxes are required, then these proposals would mean an increase of approximately 1.2 percent in the aggregate of District property, sales, and income taxes.

Over the long term, the Committee is recommending that all parties reach agreement to provide stable, long-term support for schools. In the absence of such an agreement, the Committee recommends that taxing authority be given to the Board of Education to finance any necessary budget increases.

Concerning capital requirements, the Committee is recommending a legislative change that would enable the Board of Education to retain revenues from the disposal of assets. This legislation should specify that any revenues obtained from the disposal of assets must be used by the Board of Education to meet the capital repair needs of the schools. On the basis of the Committee's reviews of the existing assets, it believes that the Board should raise between $30 million and $50 million for such repairs.

In addition, the Committee recommends that the remainder be funded through the city's capital budget at the current rate of approximately $25 million per year. This commitment, the Committee believes, is essential.

(3.) Private Sector Support

The Committee is also recommending increased support from the private sector, to be directed to special activities in particular schools, as well as support for particular projects under the revised D.C. Committee on Public Education that will be created.

Summary of the Recommendations

24. If the school system is to receive additional resources from the taxpayers and community, a quid pro quo must be established wherein the school system shows evidence of becoming more efficient and develops the capacity to carry out the improvements outlined in this plan. Further, the school system must begin to allocate funds based on need.

The additional operating budget requirements (net of savings) are as follows:

Year	Amount	Percent Increase Above 1990 Base
1990	---	--
1991	$33 million	6%
1992	$47 million	8%
1993	$58 million	9%
1994	$82 million	12% (Stable)

The program will be financed by:

(a) An increase in the Federal payment in those years covering approximately 50 percent of the total costs (net of savings), all of which should be devoted to education;

(b) Additional revenues from existing city sources to cover the additional 50 percent of costs;

(c) Savings from the existing operations of the school system of $13.5 million annually (included in the above); and

(d) Increased support from the private sector and public foundations and universities targeted at: strengthening individual schools and programs and carrying out specific functions under the newly constituted D.C. Committee on Public Education.

These increased revenues would be raised over a multi-year period.

25. To finance the capital recommendations, the Committee recommends continuation of the 1990 annual level of $25 million in the city's capital budget and generating receipts of $50 million from the disposal of school system properties at public auction.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION: HOW TO BEGIN

The preceding plan represents a long-term approach to improving the education system. The Committee fully recognizes that there are no easy, quick solutions to the complex problems faced by teachers and principals in District schools. Indeed, what is required is a systematic, sustained effort, which will take many years to accomplish.

When the Committee reviewed activities in other school systems, it found that reform efforts have taken many years. Whether it is Pittsburgh, Miami, East Harlem, Cincinnati, San Diego, or Rochester, an essential element of reform has been a long-term commitment on the part of the school system, and the community, to change.

The RAND study on educational reform stresses the need for the entire community to mobilize in support of the schools if reform is to be successful. The study notes:

> "...a citywide school improvement strategy must combine two complementary strands. The outside strand attracts and mobilizes political support and other resources from outside the traditional school bureaucracy, from taxpayers, businesses, and the larger community. The inside strand focuses on the content of schooling—curricula, academic standards, incentives and work rules for teachers, and a philosophy of school management."

By necessity, the plan proposed by the Committee is comprehensive. But at the same time, there is a need for early action, for steps that can be accomplished within the next year. These action steps should, in the Committee's judgment, be:

(a) Significant enough so that their accomplishment will represent a major step forward toward reform;

(b) Capable of being achieved so that success can breed success; and

(c) Broad based so as to require participation by all elements of the community, its political leadership, and the school system.

Accordingly, the Committee has identified a number of steps that it believes meet these criteria.

Summary of the Recommendation

Key initial implementation steps, to be accomplished within the next year, include:

(a) Create a broad-based independent organization to support public education activities in the District in the following ways:

- Provide funding for special projects;
- Increase the community's awareness of the importance of the public schools;
- Support the budget for education before the City Council and the Congress;
- Monitor the progress of the school system and the implementation of the plan through the conduct of an annual audit;
- Provide support to the school system and the Board of Education, as requested; and
- Provide technical expertise, as requested, in carrying out specific tasks, such as helping to repair facilities.

(b) Establish specific, measurable goals for the school system;

(c) Initiate school-based management programs in at least 20 schools;

(d) With the support of an outside expert, such as Dr. James Comer of Yale University, develop programs at the elementary level with comprehensive services and initiate

planning of "schools with specific themes" at the junior and senior high levels;

(e) Plan a totally restructured summer program that will be introduced in the summer of 1990;

(f) Initiate a major effort to repair facilities, including carrying out a $20-million repair program, providing all schools with adequate materials to implement a sound maintenance program; and beginning efforts to raise monies to finance repairs through disposal of assets;

(g) Reduce central operations by 100 staff for a savings of $2 million;

(h) Negotiate among all parties, particularly unions and school system management, concerning implementation of career ladders and school reform, including renegotiation of the contract to remove provisions that may prohibit true reform from occurring;

(i) Enact legislation lowering compulsory attendance age;

(j) Plan for after-school programs;

(k) Reach agreement on the early childhood program with all segments of the city; beginning implementation of the specific projects to upgrade the quality of early childhood education;

(l) Strengthen teacher recruitment program in partnership with the business community; and

(m) Undertake efforts to upgrade the curriculum and the quality of instruction.

APPENDIX A

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*As of June 15, 1989

APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C
Consultants and Volunteers

The Committee wishes to acknowledge some of the numerous consultants and volunteers who helped to carry out the work of the project in the various subcommittees.

A. Consultant Organizations/Individuals

1. EDA Systems

(a) Victor Rouse, President
(b) Barbara Bowman, Erickson Institute
(c) Portia Shields, Howard University
(d) Aaron Stills, Howard University
(e) Dian Overbey

2. Institute for Educational Leadership

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(d) Emily Feistritzer, National Center for Educational Information
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(f) Elaine Melmed, Fund for Education and Human Services
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3. Dr. Judith Jones

4. Mary Levy

5. Peat Marwick Main & Co.

(a) Larry Herman
(b) Leslie Casson
(c) Sally Neal
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6. Dr. Bruce Merrick

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Team N:

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C. Additional Volunteers Who Contributed to the Report

1. Joan Baratz-Snowden, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
2. Marsha Levine, American Federation of Teachers
3. Bella Rosenberg, American Federation of Teachers
4. Amy Peck, U.S. Department of Education
5. Beverly Silverberg, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
6. Jeannette Leonard, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
7. Herb Leonard, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
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APPENDIX D

Goals for Students Suggested by the D.C. Committee on Public Education

The following are suggested as a set of goals for the individual child in the D.C. Public School System. They are taken directly from John Goodlad, A Place Called School, modified slightly to reflect some particular circumstances of the District of Columbia.

A. Academic Goals

1. Mastery of basic skills and fundamental processes.

1.1 Learn to read, write, and handle basic arithmetical operations.

1.2 Learn to acquire ideas through reading and listening.

1.3 Learn to communicate ideas through writing and speaking.

1.4 Learn to utilize mathematical concepts.

1.5 Develop the ability to utilize available sources of information.

2. Intellectual Development

2.1 Develop the ability to think rationally, including problem-solving skills, application of principles of logic, and skill in using different modes of inquiry.

2.2 Develop the ability to use and evaluate knowledge, i.e., critical and independent thinking that enables one to make judgments and decisions in a wide variety of life roles—citizen, consumer, worker, etc.—as well as in intellectual activities.

2.3 Accumulate a general fund of knowledge, including information and concepts in mathematics, literature, natural science, and social science.

2.4 Develop positive attitudes toward intellectual activity, including curiosity and a desire for further learning.

2.5 Develop an understanding of change in society.

B. Vocational Goals

3. Career education-vocational education:

3.1 Learn how to select an occupation that will be personally satisfying and suitable to one's skills and interests.

3.2 Learn to make decisions based on an awareness and knowledge of career options.

3.3 Develop salable skills and specialized knowledge that will prepare one to become economically independent.

3.4 Develop habits and attitudes, such as pride in good workmanship, that will make one a productive participant in economic life.

3.5 Develop positive attitudes toward work, including acceptance of the necessity of making a living and an appreciation of the social value and dignity of work.

C. Social, Civic, and Cultural Goals

4. Interpersonal Understandings

4.1 Develop a knowledge of opposing value systems and their influence on the individual and society.

4.2 Develop an understanding of how members of a family and community function under different family and community patterns as well as within one's own family and community.

4.3 Develop skill in communicating effectively in groups.

4.4 Develop the ability to identify with and advance the goals and concerns of others.

4.5 Learn to form productive and satisfying relations with others based on respect, trust, cooperation, consideration, and caring.

4.6 Develop a concern for humanity and an understanding of international relations.

4.7 Develop an understanding and appreciation of cultures different from one's own.

5. Citizenship participation

5.1 Develop historical perspective.

5.2 Develop knowledge of the basic workings of the government.

5.3 Develop a willingness to participate in the political life of the nation and the community.

5.4 Develop a commitment to the values of liberty, government by consent of the governed, representational government, and one's responsibility for the welfare of all.

5.5 Develop an understanding of the interrelationships among complex organizations in a modern society, and learn to act in accordance with it.

5.6 Exercise the democratic right to dissent in accordance with personal conscience.

5.7 Develop economic and consumer skills necessary for making informed choices that enhance one's quality of life.

5.8 Develop an understanding of the basic interdependence of the biological and physical resources of the environment.

5.9 Develop the ability to act in light of this understanding of interdependence.

6. Enculturation

6.1 Develop insight into the values and characteristics, including language, of the civilization of which one is a member.

6.2 Develop an awareness and understanding of one's cultural heritage and become familiar with the achievements of the past that have inspired and influenced humanity.

6.3 Develop understanding of the manner in which traditions from the past are operative today and influence the direction and values of society.

6.4 Understand and adopt the norms, values, and traditions of the groups of which one is a member.

6.5 Learn how to apply the basic principles and concepts of the fine arts and humanities to the appreciation of the aesthetic contributions of other cultures.

7. Moral and ethical character

7.1 Develop the judgment to evaluate events and phenomena as good or evil.

7.2 Develop a commitment to truth and values.

7.3 Learn to utilize values in making choices.

7.4 Develop moral integrity.

7.5 Develop an understanding of the necessity for moral conduct.

D. Personal Goals

8. Emotional and physical well-being

8.1 Develop an understanding of the harm and impact of drugs and avoid their consumption.

8.2 Develop a knowledge of one's own body and adopt health practices that support and sustain it.

8.3 Develop an understanding of sexuality and acquire the ability to avoid unwanted teenage pregnancy and the transmission of disease.

8.4 Develop the willingness to receive emotional impressions and to expand one's affective sensitivity.

8.5 Develop the competence and skills for continuous adjustment and emotional stability, including coping with social change.

8.6 Learn to use leisure time effectively.

8.7 Develop physical fitness and recreational skills.

8.8 Develop the ability to engage in constructive self-criticism.

9. Creativity and aesthetic expression

9.1 Develop the ability to deal with problems in original ways.

9.2 Develop the ability to be tolerant of new ideas.

9.3 Develop the ability to be flexible and to consider different points of view.

9.4 Develop the ability to experience and enjoy different forms of creative expression.

9.5 Develop the ability to evaluate various forms of aesthetic expression.

9.6 Develop the willingness and ability to communicate through creative work in an active way.

9.7 Seek to contribute to cultural and social life through one's artistic, vocational, and avocational interests.

10. Self-realization

10.1 Learn to search for meaning in one's activities and develop a philosophy of life.

10.2 Develop the self-confidence necessary for knowing and confronting one's self.

10.3 Learn to assess realistically and live with one's limitations and strengths.

10.4 Recognize that one's self-concept is developed in interaction with other people.

10.5 Develop skill in making decisions with purpose.

10.6 Learn to plan and organize the environment in order to realize one's goals.

10.7 Develop willingness to accept responsibility for one's own decisions and their consequences.

10.8 Develop skill in selecting some personal, life-long learning goals and the means to attain them.

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